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THE German peace proposals, so long expected and so long delayed, have finally been launched. Before discussing them on their merits, let us find out, if we can, what they mean. Of one thing we may feel sure. They are not, as certain Englishmen and Frenchmen profess to believe, a symptom of German weakness. We all know that the Central Powers are stronger now than at any time since last May, and that the prospect of inflicting a decisive defeat on their armies has become indefinitely remote. Germany is proposing peace negotiations, not because her power of resistance is anywhere near exhausted, but because by proposing them she can sharply distinguish the strength of her position from the weakness of that of her adversaries. As a result of moving for peace and submitting terms that look moderate to the Central European peoples, she strengthens herself at home and throws upon the Allies the burden of continuing the war. Thus the joint note, while addressed to neutral governments for transmission to her enemies, is plainly intended for home consumption. By consenting to its publication Germany is placating her allies, who in the event of a prolonged war must submit to increasingly complete subjugation, if not by Russia then by Germany, while at the same time she is convincing her own people of the moderation of their national ambitions and of the aggressive designs of their opponents. She is taking advantage of what may be described as her interior diplomatic lines. She is in a position to operate freely both on a peace front and on a war front and to change quickly from one to another. She can afford to be apparently candid and from the point of view of the military situation apparently moderate. Her enemies, on the contrary, are condemned by their recent military reverses and by their declared need of a decisive victory to be consistently bellicose, to insist upon fighting until they regain some of their diminished prestige. They cannot be candid about terms, because they are divided among themselves as to the political objects for which they are willing to fight until the bitter end. It is this situation, superficially so much to the advantage of Germany, which the peace proposals are intended to expose, yet the Germans characteristically began an ostensibly conciliatory negotiation in words which have been selected as peculiarly and emphatically unconciliatory and offensive.

EVEN, however, though the joint note of the Central Powers plainly belongs to the diplomacy of war rather than to the diplomacy of peace, it submits to the Allies a proposal which it would be costly and dangerous wholly to reject. The proposal to negotiate raises two different but related questions. It raises in the first place the question whether any specific terms which the Central Powers are ready to submit should be considered acceptable. If Englishmen and Frenchmen answer this question in the negative, they may well be sustained in so doing by the disinterested opinion of neutral countries. At this writing the definite terms on which the Germans will make peace are not known, but the details which have transpired look in the direction of a net German


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advantage from the war amounting perhaps to ten or fifteen per cent. If the Allies have any sufficient prospect of reducing this percentage and of preventing the war from ending with German arms clearly in the ascendant, they have sound reasons, associated with the ultimate organization of peace, for continuing to fight. But the German note raises not only a question about specific terms, but also the question of whether the war shall be terminated by a dictated or by a negotiated peace. The Allies would, we believe, make a grave mistake in refusing to negotiate on the ground that peace must be dictated. They may in their own minds postpone serious negotiations until they have achieved an important military success. But if they refuse to negotiate at all they will be adopting a policy which in the long run cannot be sustained, and which will mean a prolongation of the struggle under conditions of constantly increasing bitterness and desperation. They could not adopt a policy better designed to unite Germany in the conviction that it is fighting for the mere right of existence and to divide the peoples of the Allied countries into pro-war and anti-war parties. They have nothing to lose by negotiation except the vain hope of a peace dictated to an utterly beaten and humiliated enemy; and the abandonment of such a hope would be a gain rather than a loss. Negotiation means the beginning of an attempt to resume contacts, to define conflicting issues, to vitalize public opinion, and to substitute, if not peace for war at least the methods of peace for the methods of war. We hope for the sake of the French and British peoples that the French and English governments will not refuse.

ASSUMING that the war continues, every friend of Great Britain will hope devoutly that the new British government will be able to introduce increasing energy and success into its prosecution. If what Great Britain has lacked is a sufficiently united and vigorous executive, the new government should certainly be able to supply the deficiency. The War Council is practically a committee of public safety, to whose keeping is confided not only all executive initiative, but the determination of the national policies. It brings into existence a new plural monarchy resting on a parliamentary plebiscite. The organization of the new executive is revolutionary. The Council contains only one departmental head, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he is included apparently rather for personal than for administrative reasons. It excludes the First Lord of the Admiralty, the heads of the War and Foreign Offices—the three departmental chiefs most immediately concerned with the successful prosecution of the war. The consolidation of executive leadership is accompanied by a disintegration of the Cabinet. It will apparently cease to exist as the executive committee of a parliamentary majority. It has been increased to thirty members, and has consequently become too large to exercise any collective executive functions. It will consist of heads of departments, many of them trained specialists, whose relation to the War Council will not differ essentially from that of an American cabinet minister to the President, and who will be associated one with another chiefly in order to guarantee to the War Council the support of Parliament. In this way a semi-dictatorship has temporarily been grafted on a group of parliamentary institutions, which had been laboriously constructed chiefly to avoid any such concentration of sovereign power. The government of the British Commonwealth is being confided to Lloyd George and his associates almost as completely as the government of France was confided to the first Napoleon.

A DICTATORSHIP is a form of government which depends for its success upon the ability of the dictator. In the case of the new British War Council the ability necessary to success will have to be very extraordinary. To an outsider it looks like a dangerous attempt to improvise victory—a desperate device of the British rulers to escape from their own difficulties by a tour de force. That Mr. Lloyd George and his associates can accomplish much merely as a consequence of their ability to act more promptly, more decisively and even more ruthlessly is probably the case. The food, liquor, and submarine problems will all stand much more drastic treatment than they have been obtaining. But the War Council cannot lead the nation successfully out of its difficulties merely by virtue of power to make prompt and capable decisions. Its success depends less upon its ability to organize the war than upon its attitude towards the more difficult job of planning peace. The British Empire is fighting for certain political objects which have never received any candid or exact definition and to which military and naval operations have been imperfectly adjusted. If the War Council shapes these political objects in conformity with the permanent interests of the commonwealth and if it avoids placing an excessive strain upon the physical and moral resources of the country, it will have done most of all to justify its own creation. But in that case it will have behaved better than any other dictatorship of history. Dictators are, for the most part, the victims rather than the masters of the crisis which has brought them into existence. The British War Council like former dictators runs this danger. If it

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does not keep its war measures subordinate to sound political policy it will fail in the end, because it will be seeking to accomplish an impossible task. That the task of emerging with credit from the war has become an impossible one for the British government we do not, of course, for one moment believe; but it could be made impossible by a War Council which in the effort to win the war should allow the better purposes of the English nation to be submerged.

NOT the Sussex pledge, but its administration, is what plagues us. For Germany continues to make mistakes, and the two governments are consequently involved in a perpetual debate over questions of intention, good faith, what is a warning and what is safety. The main outlines of the situation are probably these: the party of Bethmann-Hollweg abides by the pledge, but is willing to take certain risks in the actual application of it. That is where the margin of error lies, and it can never be eliminated while the rules of warfare on the sea are what they are. A navy without harbors cannot raid commerce without constant peril to non-combatants. Submarines cannot conduct "cruiser warfare," because they lack the chief quality of a cruiser: incontestable superiority to the ship attacked. Until submarines cease to be so vulnerable their action will necessarily be panicky. Add to this the fact that transports and merchant ships are indistinguishable at a distance, and often indistinguishable except by the subtlest international lawyer, and it is evident why a foreign office may make a pledge, and find it violated intermittently. With no port to which the prize can be conveyed, with no crews to man the prize, with a vessel that can be sunk by a small gun acting against an enemy who has all but abolished the distinction between warships and merchant ships, it is no wonder that Washington is forever asking plaintively about the pledge. And on top of it all comes the well authenticated report that the new British government intends to arm all merchant ships fore and aft, thus making them at least semi-offensive vessels. The business of being a neutral, the business of trying to enforce rules which inventions and geographical facts have rendered obsolete, looks even more than ever like holding the winds with a net.

ONCE again are the safety of the American Republic and the perpetuity of its institutions threatened. The passage of an amendment to the federal Constitution, which would prevent any state from denying to women the right to vote, would, according to Mr. Elihu Root, undermine "the right of self-goverment," "overthrow the principles of liberty upon which the American union was established," "create a condition of intolerable tyranny," and "destroy the nation." Mr. Root has a considerable reputation for political sagacity, but when he breaks out in eruptions of this kind we cannot help considering how far he deserves it. What political sagacity he has must by his own report have been sorely tried by the necessity of casting his ballot at the last election. One candidate was condemned by all Republican speakers, including Mr. Root, as indifferent to vital national interests, while his opponent, Mr. Hughes, was participating in a conspiracy to destroy the nation and to establish an intolerable tyranny. The offence on Mr. Hughes's part was the more heinous because as Justice of the Supreme Court he had been expounding Constitution for over five years and had actually failed to discern what the principles of liberty were upon which the American Union was based. How Mr. Root would vote and advise his fellow-citizens to vote for a man who was seeking to destroy the nation, and why he did not protest during the campaign would be difficult to understand, were it not for one fact. Like so many defenders of the Constitution who during the last three generations have considered every proposal to change it as destructive to the nation, he does not actually mean more than ten per cent of what he says.

THE enfranchisement of women by federal amendment would, in Mr. Root's opinion, be utterly disastrous, because it would subject the "local affairs" of one section of the country to the "dictation of vast multitudes of voters living in other parts of the country." But how are we to distinguish local from national affairs? The South considered slavery to be a "local affair" and so it was; but it was the kind of local affair which when controlled by localities in their own interests really endangered the safety of the Republic. The denial of votes to women does not bring dangers as serious as those which resulted from the denial of freedom to Negroes; but surely the franchise is a matter more of national than of local concern. The American nation is supposed to be a democracy. In a democracy few aspects of the political organization are of greater intrinsic importance than the right to vote. The right is important, however, less because of the political power which it confers on the voter, than because of the ensuing political responsibility. The exercise of this political responsibility by the adult population attaches them to the state and is essential to their political education. If the Fathers had attributed the same importance to democracy and to voting that we do, the nation

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would from the beginning have decided for itself whether or not any class of citizens should be authorized to vote for federal officials.

ONE of the matters to which Congress should give early attention is that of the status of labor unions under the Sherman law. It is most dangerous to leave this subject in its present state of uncertainty. We have previously expressed the opinion that the labor sections of the Clayton act, generally believed in labor union circles to exempt trade unions from the Sherman law, did nothing of the kind, and were most artfully drawn so as to give the appearance of changing the law while in fact they left it as it was. In a letter last week, Mr. H. LaRue Brown, a lawyer for whose ability and experience in labor matters we have a high respect, suggests that another part of the act, to which we did not specifically refer, has perhaps effected some change in the law. We had supposed that the section in question was a very succinct summary of the things which it has always been lawful for labor unions to do. Indeed, it seemed rather to enforce than to refute the argument that the law was intended to appear to make changes, and yet change nothing. Mr. Brown does not affirm that it makes any changes; he merely suggests that it may. Surely this doubt, if it is no more, is enough to condemn the act, and to make its revision by the present Congress an act of duty. With labor in its present frame of mind, it is of the highest importance that no opportunity should be given for impugning the good faith of Congress in its treatment of labor problems.

## A White Peace and Its Consequences

IT was manifest that the collapse of Rumania would exercise a powerful influence on the duration and outcome of the war, and the announcement of proposed terms of peace by Germany is beginning to indicate what that influence may be. How far will it modify the political objects which are shaping the policy of the several belligerents? How far will it accelerate or delay the coming of peace? These are the questions which thoughtful people both in belligerent and neutral countries are asking, and to which they are obtaining some unexpected answers. Until lately, for instance, the New York *Tribune* has argued that the Allies could win a decisive victory, and that a victory of this kind was the indispensable condition of a satisfactory and enduring peace. Since the collapse of Rumania the *Tribune* has abandoned any expectation of such a victory. It predicts an inevitable stalemate. "The Marne," it says, "abolished vain German hopes; the fall of Bucharest must put an end to equally colossal Allied expectations. We are marching towards a draw, but a real draw"—one based upon the map of Europe of July, 1914, not of December, 1916. Thus it implicitly advises the Allies to recognize the limitation of their power and to adapt their political objects to it. They should fight for nothing more than the status quo ante—for what is known in Europe as the white peace. But these maximum terms should also be the minimum. Since anything short of the status quo ante would mean a net victory for Germany and a dangerous alteration of the balance of power in her favor, they are justified in continuing to fight regardless of consequences until the white peace is secured. They are justified, according to the *Tribune's* interpretation, in rejecting the German terms.

Ever since the fall of 1914, when the Germans were beaten back from the Marne and repulsed at Ypres, a strong case could be urged in favor of the white peace. On January 1st, 1915, their victories had conferred on the Allies a great opportunity. They could have announced to the world that considering the hideous suffering which a prolonged war would involve, they were ready to make peace with the Central Powers on the basis of the status quo ante, but that the offer of these terms would not hold beyond a short specified period. If their overtures were rejected they would then have felt free to impose any terms on the Central Powers which the interests of the Allied nations suggested and their military and naval power could extort. The submission of such an offer would have placed them in an impregnable moral position. Thereafter, no reasonable neutral or German could have suspected them of harboring aggressive designs against the Central Powers; and if peace had not supervened they would have been justified in demanding compensation from Germany for their subsequent expenses and losses. Not only would the offer have probably resulted in peace, but after the terrible slaughter and apprehension of the first black months, the restoration of peace might have encouraged some attempt to organize international security along the lines suggested by Lord Grey in his negotiations at the end of July with the German Chancellor.

But the offer was never made. After January 1st the Allies began to wage a war the object of which was no longer primarily to protect themselves against German attack or to secure the rights of small nations, but to alter in their favor the European balance of power. This second phase of the contest has been continuing for two

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years, during which time all the Balkan states and the whole Near East have been embroiled. The net result of the contest on the eastern front has been very favorable to the Central Powers. Some Turkish and some Austrian territory has been occupied by Russian troops, but for the most part those Balkan states which trusted to Germany have fared well, while those which trusted to Russia and Great Britain have seen their armies shattered and their territories overrun. These victories have been due exclusively to German efficiency. Without the support of Germany Austria-Hungary would have collapsed under Russian attack, and the capital of the Turkish Empire would have been occupied by English troops. It is German armies which have conquered Serbia and Rumania, which have stiffened the Austrian lines in Galicia, and which occupy Poland and Courland. It is German organizing ability which is making the most of Bulgaria and is renewing the military effectiveness of the Turkish armies. In spite, consequently, of the accessions of Italy and Rumania the Germans have prevented the Allies from making any headway in their plan of detaching population from German control. During the period in which the two groups of Powers have been fighting to secure supremacy in the Near East, German military and political prestige in that region has steadily and largely increased.

The consequences of this success are not, however, sufficiently recognized. The increase in German political and military prestige would keep a return to the territorial status quo from being a return to the actual status quo. A stalemate would now have some of the results of a partial German victory, and this fact, as we point out elsewhere, explains the apparent liberality of the German peace terms from the German point of view. During the past two years the organizing ability of the Germans has subjugated their allies quite as effectively as their armies have subjugated their weaker enemies. Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey have been Germanized. Serbia, Rumania and Greece could not effectively resist the German influence dominant in their neighborhood; and they would not want to resist it in case the Germans showed a disposition to respect their national susceptibilities. Thus the status quo ante cannot be restored in the Near East by refusing to alter the map. The inhabitants of the charted territory cannot resurrect the sympathies, confidences and ambitions with which they started the war. They will have lost faith in Russia and in Russian ability to organize the Slavic peoples. They will have been captivated, if not conquered, by the demonstration of German power, by the incontestable superiority of German methods. They will be pre-disposed to accept German leadership, and because of this disposition only a decisive victory for the Allies can now prevent the program of a Germanized Central Europe from being submitted to the test of attempted accomplishment.

The Allies are resolved not to accept a Germanized Central Europe, even though it rests on the acquiescence of the minor Slav peoples; but inasmuch as they may be forced to consent, it is worth while to consider possible compensations. Germany would have acquired more or less political control over a large region whose economic resources are undeveloped and whose inhabitants possess an inefficient political and social organization. German control would not rest on military conquest. It would depend partly on treaties, partly on prestige, partly on the consent of the inhabitants and partly on the proved ability of the German administration to manage the business of these peoples better than they can do it for themselves. The Germans could not treat such peoples as they have in the past treated the Prussian Poles or the Alsatians. The different groups of non-Germans in the Central European system would insist on a substantial measure of self control. Some kind of a federal system would have to be forged, and the making of it would be a slow, delicate and dangerous operation. The work of economic development and political reconstruction would absorb German energy for a generation or two, and there is a fair chance that it would be put to excellent use. The conception of Central Europe is not merely imperialist. As elaborated by Naumann it demands a large measure of liberalism, both in German domestic organization and in federal and foreign policy. These non-German peoples will never be politically content unless they can be wrought into an international commonwealth, analogous to that which is needed for British imperial federation. The Germans may be incapable of organizing such a liberal state; but if they are, Middle Europe is more likely to be the grave of German political ambition than its consummate opportunity.

In any event the Germans would cease for the time being to threaten British and French seapower. They would be definitely committed to a development of Bismarck's continental policy. The Quadruple Alliance, which would be endangered in case Russia emerged from the war with Constantinople in her grasp and the Balkans under her control, would be cemented by the threat of German expansion. Russia cannot hope to regain her lost prestige by submitting to the German ambition or by isolated opposition to it. She has been beaten by Germany because of the latter's

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emphatic superiority in social, political and military ability. If she wishes to renew the contest, she will require a drastic political and economic reorganization and the continued friendship of the western Powers. The Quadruple Alliance would, consequently, endure and it would increase in strength as a consequence of improved organization and of increases in population throughout the Russian and British Empires. If it became necessary to oppose a renewal of German aggression the four Powers could do so with a good fighting chance of success; but in order to insure themselves against such a danger, it would be the business of the Allies to organize themselves into a peace league and so, if possible, to obtain the assistance of the existing neutrals in furnishing a sufficient sanction for a new formulation of international law. How formidable the obstacles to the organization of a peace league would be under the supposed conditions, it is useless to guess. They would depend on the disposition shown by each group of Powers to meet the just grievances of its rivals—the disposition of Germany, for instance, to allow Russia an outlet to warm water, the disposition of France and Great Britain to open wide the door of colonial trade. But at any rate there would be nothing necessarily disastrous even about a white peace which has been turned gray by the increase of German prestige. It might place fewer impediments in the way of the ultimate creation of a system of super-national law than would the results of a decisive victory for either Russia or Germany.

## The Failure of the States

> "Legislation depriving the states of regulative power over the railroads would practically obliterate state lines and would lead to a centralization which would threaten the very existence of our dual form of government."
>
> —*William J. Bryan,*
> *Washington, Dec. 7th, 1916.*

SINCE the foundation of the Republic no part of the established political system has been defended with more assiduity and energy of conviction than states' rights, and none with less success. One of our two major political parties was organized partly for the express purpose of preventing the encroachment by the central government on the inherited domain of local self-government, and until the Civil War the Democrats succeeded in maintaining an effective resistance to the instinctive appetite for power so persistently exhibited by the organized nation. Our great civil conflict itself turned upon the comparative claims upon the allegiance of the American citizen made by nation and state. The states lost and as a consequence of their defeat the moral and in fact the legal preponderance of the nation was established, but the legal preponderance was ambiguous, and as a matter of law the national government continued to be a collection of specific political functions which had been graciously surrendered by the sovereign states. The Supreme Court has tried to keep substantially intact the reserved powers of the states, and in one famous decision emasculated the fourteenth amendment in order to preserve the traditional balance between state and nation. Finally, the majority of American lawyers and publicists still like to celebrate states' rights as the chief legal bulwark of the American democracy. Yet in spite of the tendency of these traditions, and in spite of their continued reverberation in contemporary political discussion, the aggrandizement of the central at the expense of the local government has been steady and apparently inexorable. It has never been occurring more rapidly or meeting with less resistance than during the past four years, when the nation has been governed by the traditional states' rights party and by a President whose preference for local self-government has been described by himself as passionate. No wonder an English observer of American political processes inquires, as Mr. Harold J. Laski does in another column, whether the American democracy is not consenting to the erection in Washington of an omnivorous and autocratic mechanism of centralized control.

Symptoms of the tendency toward centralization are showing themselves in every region of political activity. Not only do Democratic congresses pass child-labor laws, and undermine the independence of the states by grants in aid of post roads and industrial education, but practically all agitation for social and economic reforms turn to the national government as the only sufficiently powerful political instrument of their designs. Woman suffragists are practically united in seeking to prevent any state from denying the vote to women. The prohibitionists are equally resolved to prevent any state from allowing its inhabitants to drink intoxicants. Other reformers propose to nationalize the machinery of presidential elections and the organization of the militia. The railroads are impatient of state control and insist upon being placed under the exclusive jurisdiction of federal law and administration. The same agencies are being invoked to deal with the failure to organize a more economical method of distributing the food supply. The New York *World* cannot be accused of any prejudice in favor of centralized control, yet it comes out squarely in favor of the protection of consumers against extortionate prices by congressional action. "In this as in many other respects," it declared recently, "the states have

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failed adequately to assert their authority and the prospect is that the matter will be taken out of their hands."

The states have undoubtedly in many instances cheapened their authority by failing to assert it; but the difficulty runs deeper than mere negligence. During Mr. Roosevelt's second administration Mr. Elihu Root in a famous speech solemnly warned the state governments as to the consequences of their shortcomings. He said: "I desire to press upon you with all the earnestness I possess that there is but one way in which the states of the Union can maintain their power and authority, and that way is by an awakening on the part of the states to a realization of their own duties to the country." Since the warning was issued the states have steadily been losing both in prestige and in actual power; but their losses cannot be traced exclusively to their failure "adequately to assert their authority." In many of the states the people interested in the local governments were alarmed and aroused to action by Mr. Root's warning. During the next few years they did away with certain of the more flagrant abuses in state politics and passed many measures of political reform and economic amelioration. But this improvement in the standards of state government has failed to make the states more popular and more respected. First they were damned because they didn't do their duty. Then they were damned because they did do it, or at least tried to do it. The railroads, for instance, are appealing for federal incorporation and exclusive federal supervision precisely because of the pernicious activities of too many state legislatures and state railroad commissions. Time was when the railroads considered regulation by the states as an illustration of the admirable provincialism of the American system of government, but those were the days of houses of mirth at the state capitals and of the domination of railroad agents over state legislatures. Now the railroad lawyers beseech as the very wine of salvation an amount of federal regulation which they formerly would have denounced as necessarily destructive of railroad prosperity and of the priceless fabric of American political institutions. The change has been brought about as the result of an honest attempt by the states to regulate the railroads. Thus the states are becoming the professional scapegoat for the many failures of the American political system.

Neither is this condemnation as unreasonable as it may seem. When a nation's political institutions or individuals are damned alike for what they do and for what they fail to do, their predicament is usually the consequence of being involved in a false situation. The American state governments have assuredly been pushed into a false situation by the profound change in the scope and the needs of American lawmaking which has taken place since the Constitution was written. They are incapable either of abandoning or of properly performing some of their functions. The framers of the Constitution intended to confide all political and economic interests of national rather than local importance to the Constitution or to the central government, but in discriminating between what was of national and what was of local importance they were warped by their conception of the more important governmental functions as negative rather than as positive. The business of social legislation, of guiding the exercise of individual and property rights in the public interest was considered local, while the business of safeguarding those rights and of preventing any citizen from being deprived of his legitimate exercise was, or came to be considered, national. This discrimination of functions worked sufficiently well, as long as the Republic continued to be an expanded village community, a democracy of small property-owners, but it ceased to work so well when the industrial revolution created a class of wage-earners and when the automatic exercise of individual rights no longer produced a socially desirable distribution of wealth. It then became just as essential to the national welfare to socialize as it was to safeguard the exercise of individual rights. Yet the business of positive social legislation was for the most part reserved to the states, which are expressly licensed to deal with it as chiefly of local rather than of national importance. As long as they continue to transact this business the nation will be devoid of a comprehensive and coördinated social policy. Reformers who seek to accomplish social reforms will be driven to aggrandize the central government at the expense of the states.

It is vain to expect uniformity of social legislation or even a satisfactory amount of coöperation from a group of independent local governments. A state legislature cannot be expected to consider the interests and opinions of any but its own constituents. It exists to legislate in their interests just as Congress exists to legislate for the nation. That some of the states pass child-labor laws and others refuse, that some allow to railroad corporations special privileges which others deny, that some are willing to spend much in raising standards of public health and public education and that others are willing to spend little, that these and similar variations in policy occur, is not only an inevitable but a justifiable result of confiding vital national business to governments which are responsible only to local opinions and interests. Yet the inequalities and excesses in state legislative policy no less inevitably and properly drive re-

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formers to the national government for assistance. The states which connive at child labor, which allow the exploitation of men and women in industry, which are indifferent to the needs in an industrial democracy for social education (and some of them there will always be)—those states are injuring the efficiency, the health, and the morals not only of their own citizens but of the whole nation. In this region of social legislation the need for some uniformity of policy is indisputable. The agitation for the establishment of national standards will increase just in proportion as public opinion is aroused to the danger of allowing human wreckage and popular unrest to gather at its existing rate of accumulation.

It is, we believe, a mistake to attach to the American states the halo of a salutary provincialism. They constitute for the most part the citadels of American political abuses and social obscurantism. Because they are licensed to exercise a valuable share of discretionary sovereign power, they have been seized by the bipartisan political machine as the most lucrative source of revenue and favors, and lie helpless in its grasp. The politicians have every reason to encourage a state government in its natural tendency to do what it cannot do well and to leave undone much of what it is entirely competent to do. They are willing to pour out legislation regardless of the price of good white paper; they are equally willing to provide administrative officials for the enforcement of the new laws; but they ruthlessly strangle any attempt to give responsibility and efficiency to the exercise of state administrative power. The machine has much less difficulty in exploiting the states than it has in exploiting the cities and the nation, because the states, in spite of certain exceptions such as California, are arbitrary and antiquated political sub-divisions, rather than centers around which economic interest and local public opinion can fruitfully gather. Their refusal to coöperate with one another in doing what they are able to do, their insistence upon competing with the central government in doing what they are incompetent to do, prophesies a continued shrinkage of prestige and power, until their status is changed in some future constitutional convention. Yet American provincialism will not die with them. It is being kept alive by providing new local representative institutions as a part of national organization. The Federal Reserve system, for instance, combines regional banks, which preserve a sufficient measure of local self-government with central political control. Similar examples of regional independence subject to national determination of general policy will almost certainly be adopted when the work of reorganizing essential national industries, such as the railroads and the food and fuel supplies are seriously undertaken. Thus gradually the really desirable American provincialism may obtain organs of its own, independent of the states which will be designed to coöperate with the national organization rather than compete with it.

## Republican Resurrection

EVERY few days now we hear some new project for giving life to the Republican party—the formation of a revised committee, the dropping of certain older leaders, or the adjustment of local difficulties. If Mr. Hughes had shaken hands with Mr. So-and-so, or if the Progressive committeemen in such-and-such a state had been placated, the nation would be Republican. People talk as if the party were a secondary football team after a defeat, to be patched up by substituting a fresh end and tackle, inventing a new trick play, and teaching the quarterback not to fumble. Yet no first-class council of coaches would be guilty of such a paltry analysis. What is needed is a consistent policy, which will carry these details along behind it. There is no reason to suppose that the drift which swept a million and a half votes away from the "normal" Republican majority stopped dead on election day. It may be that there is in the party no Percy Haughton or Tad Jones, or that if there are such men the organization will not recognize them. Yet if the party is the national savior, the marvel of efficiency that it tried to make us believe it was last fall, it will find or develop real leaders and listen to them. It will go into the campaign of 1920 with a policy fitted to the needs of the nation.

The mistakes of the past campaign do not indicate that there is not already latent the material for such a policy. During Mr. Wilson's first four years many Republicans felt a lack of coherence and purpose in the nation and its government. Their criticisms were often specific but usually narrow in scope; the general situation they felt intensely, but saw vaguely. The Republican leaders were content not to formulate this feeling except as three issues: anti-Wilsonism, preparedness and the tariff. We were supposed to unify our nation by the simple process of turning out a Democrat and putting in a Republican, and this Republican's assurance of his own purposefulness was the promise of military and economic "protection." These proposals met neither the actual situation, nor the full aspirations of the people. The campaign brought to the surface a pacifism and a progressivism which was far from negative, and which the orthodox Republican container was too shallow to hold. It spilled over into protest

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and swept Mr. Wilson and his party into office.

Let us go back again to the original desire for unity. If we faced a crisis in June, we still face a crisis. What is our present situation? Primitive anti-Wilsonism is wiped off the slate. If one party is any more efficient than the other, the people still need to be convinced of it, and they can be so convinced not by attacks on personalities of opponents, but by signs of intelligence in the opposition. Preparedness as a scarehead became dull even before the campaign. The people do not believe we are in any imminent military danger. Even if we were, the multiplication of dreadnoughts and universal service itself would be but the shadow of military power—of which the substance, as everybody knows by this time, is economic organization. The real situation confronting America to-day is that while we hang back in the nineteenth-century industrial chaos, the great states of Europe have been shaken into extreme efficiency either for war or for peace. Their governments have been made into highly centralized and delicately adjusted machines which own the railroads, control the other fundamental industries, enlist the coöperation of labor, and regulate the distribution and the prices of necessities. Waste motion in the economic life of these countries is largely eliminated. Seeing this situation many of us are rightly alarmed. But is it not ludicrous that our prominent alarmists have met the military danger merely by the proposal that every man be trained to shoot a gun, and the commercial danger only by the proposal that we establish an old-fashioned protective tariff, which would be a dramatic admission of our weakness, a measure to preserve the home market by the sacrifice of the foreign one?

If we wish to compete with Europe after the war we must do the same sort of thing with our production, our labor and our distribution that Europe has done with hers. The Republican proposals of 1916 were equivalent to putting a tough crust around an underdone pie. The thing to do is to cook the pie. Nothing will really suffice but a thoroughgoing program of nationalization. Of course no slavish imitation of Europe can succeed; we must avoid the ruthless forms of civil and military compulsion, and develop our power by coöperation and in the spirit of American liberalism. Government ownership of railroads and participation in fundamental industries, a sweeping revision of our wasteful methods of distributing necessities, the thorough organization of labor and its recognition as a full partner in the nation's business—these must be American aims. If our present chaotic condition is to be further aggravated by futile attempts to run public utilities for private profit, to bleed the consumer in order to furnish incomes for useless middlemen, to suppress the legitimate interests of labor in its own organization and rewards, we have little chance either to fight or to produce as a nation. High prices caused by internal maladjustment will rob us of trade at home and abroad, and a high tariff would be a crowning stupidity.

Somebody is saying that it is all very well to decree such a policy, but that politically it is impossible. Is it? The Wilson administration has already moved along this road and has carried with it the more factional and the less national of the two great parties. The Republicans must understand that they are now definitely a minority party, and that a minority party cannot rest on its laurels; its only chance is to be aggressive. Its only opportunity to prevent Wilson's solidifying progressive support behind him is to outbid him for that support. Having done so, the party could count on the Bourbon South and the states' rights advocates to swing the Democrats into the conservative position. A thoroughgoing program of nationalization would put the Republican party back into its historic place as the organizer of the nation. It would not be a reversal of Republican political philosophy, but a logical development of it. It would alienate a few reactionary votes, but it would eventually attract the more intelligent business men, the liberal middle class, the energetic West, the farmers and possibly even a majority of labor. The only factor that will make such a policy impossible is the reluctance of Republican leaders. But if the Republican party does not courageously undertake to weld us into a modern nation, sooner or later some other party will surely do so, and the traditional savior of the country will either disappear in the quagmire of factionalism or shrink into an impotent gesture of reaction.

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# The Kingdom of Poland

COMING away the other day from a long discussion with a very able Pole, I found my mind, by a process of reaction, turning from the details which we had considered to certain fundamental and theoretical questions. We had talked of populations in percentages, of the conflicting interests of Germany, Austria and Russia, of kings and constitutions, of parties and their divergent calculations. The Pole was a rich mine of uncensored knowledge, and some of his information, as he argued for the solution of his national question by independence, had been startling and illuminating. But after parting from him, I found myself conducting with his echo one of those Socratic dialogues which are so enormously effective in the absence of the other party.

Independence is a relative term. Before one decides that Poland ought to have or can have independence, one must know what kind of Europe will be her environment. If it is to be the Europe we have known in the past, the Europe of guarded frontiers and competitive armaments, of allied groups and the armed peace, then independence for Poland is a ludicrous impossibility. Assume for a moment that all the twenty millions of Poles can be united, that their national state can freely frame its own constitution and elect its own monarchical or republican chief, that it obtains its outlet to the sea by the creation of a free port at Danzig, even then its independence would be nothing but a name. No ingenuity can bestow upon it natural or easily defensible boundaries, and all the new science of trench warfare would fail to enable it to secure itself by its own man-power against the three great empires which surround it. It must attach itself to one group or the other. The necessity of protecting one or two of its three fronts by contracting a permanent military alliance with one or two of its great neighbors is obvious, and it entails large political consequences. Its ally or allies will want guaranties for the permanence of the connection. Too weak to defend themselves alone, the Poles are still strong enough to be an important balancing factor in the distribution of military power in Europe. Any doubt as to which camp included them would be for all their neighbors a source of intolerable unrest.

This means, I think, that in such a Europe they will never be quite free to appoint their own king or to conduct their own diplomatic, military or trade policy. They will be at the best if not exactly a vassal state, then certainly a fettered ally within the group which they ultimately join. Real independence, in the sense that they could choose their own sovereign, conduct their own diplomatic policy and dispose at will of their military power, would imply a condition of Europe in which military power itself had become a matter of indifference to their neighbors. Idealists and neutrals may consider Polish preferences and the future of Polish culture. The belligerent Powers will consider chiefly the two million Polish bayonets which have to be assigned to one of the two camps, or distributed between them. In these conditions Poland can enjoy only a relative independence.

The choice (in so far as the Poles can choose at all) is complicated. On the one hand the Central Powers have revived the forbidden word, "independence." They have resurrected the Polish kingdom, and made, merely by that word, a powerful appeal to the sentiment of a race which has lived on memory and hope. It is true that whatever the limits of this kingdom may be, it will not at the best include all the home-lands of the Poles, and at the worst it may contain only the half. The Pole who has witnessed one miracle is ready, however, to expect another. Give him a "Piedmont," and he thinks he can recover the rest of his heritage. He is not anxious about Galicia. It enjoyed a satisfactory measure of autonomy in the past, and it has been promised some further improvement in its status for the future. He argues that even the German Poles must profit by the change. Hitherto, the German Empire was always able to claim that the comparison between Warsaw and Posen was not unfavorable to itself. If the German Pole enjoyed no better security for his national rights than the Russian Pole, and had to complain in addition of the really barbarous policy of colonization, he enjoyed on the other hand a higher level of material prosperity, better facilities for education, and securer civil rights. But if Warsaw is destined to happiness, it follows that something must be done to improve the lot of Posen. So much the German Radicals at least perceive, and promise their Poles a generous share in the benefits of the "new orientation."

The abler Poles have no illusions about the meaning of the "independence" they will enjoy. But they argue that it will fetter only their external policy. At home they will be free to create a national Polish state, and to a Russian Pole who was not free even to found an elementary school in his native village, the restriction on his liberty of choice in the sphere of high politics may well seem a bearable evil. The Russians offer

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promises on the other hand to unite the three fragments of the divided race. That, however, depends on the incalculable military event, and on a Russian victory so complete as this, few Poles who have seen both armies at close quarters dare reckon to-day. Assume, however, that the reunion is an accomplished fact, the question then arises, what kind of "autonomy" the Russians are likely to confer. They have never defined it. They are divided into two schools, of which one would give full home rule, and the other no more than local government by towns and counties, without a legislature. The latter school is still—or was till yesterday—in the ascendant. Confidence would be easier, were it not that the Poles remember the withdrawal after fifteen years of the autonomy, never fully applied, which they once enjoyed, and that they ponder on the more recent experience of Finland.

It is obvious that if the military position on the eastern front should become more precarious than it seems at present, the statemanship which each side displays in handling the Poles may be a decisive factor. So far the Russians have hardly faced this aspect of the question at all, and indeed the recent circular of the Ministry of the Interior, which accused the Poles of going over bodily to the Austrian camp, seemed to renounce any idea of making a bid for their support. The bid, if ever it is effectively made, will be dangerously belated. The Germans, on the other hand, since they valued and needed the military support of the Poles, have gone to work methodically. They invited the people of Russian Poland to nominate a commission to negotiate with them. It was chosen from the existing Polish organizations, some educational, some philanthropic, some commercial and some municipal. Care was taken to include no one whose "stake in the country" as a landowner would make it difficult for him to be independent. The commission of seven was invited to go to Berlin. It replied that all the negotiations must take place at Warsaw: it would go to Berlin only if and when it had reached a satisfactory settlement. It has gone to Berlin. The inference seems clear that on paper at least the outline of the Polish kingdom is relatively promising. My Polish informant did not despair even of the inclusion in it of some districts of German Posen—those in which the Polish element in the population is sixty-five per cent. The average in Posen as a whole is only fifty-five per cent, but some frontier districts might be ceded under this condition.

In regard to Austrian Galicia there is an exciting speculative possibility. The Austrian Emperor has conceded to it some higher status. This may conceivably mean that Galicia will become formally a kingdom, united by a personal union to the Hapsburg crown. In that case some Poles have an interesting strategy under consideration. If the new Austro-German Kingdom of Poland were to elect as its hereditary king no less a person than the Emperor-King of Austria-Hungary, the union of their race would be achieved to the extent of two-thirds at least. Galicia and Warsaw would then amalgamate to form the third Kingdom under the Hapsburg rule. They would be tied, to be sure, to the Central Empires in their external policy, but their internal life would be as independent as that of Hungary. No solution under the exclusive protection of either of the two European groups can promise them a higher degree of independence than this.

At the first glance the Entente is bound to combat any solution of the Polish problem under Austro-German auspices. It may follow one of two courses. It may simply rally to the Russian solution, and this is what Mr. Asquith and M. Briand have already done. One hopes that in return, some conditions have been laid down as to the meaning of the promised "autonomy." The other course would have been to adopt the idea of a Polish Kingdom, to insist that all Powers shall guarantee it, and to use the whole weight of the Entente to give the new state a wider extent and a larger independence than the Germans and Austrians purpose. That would have been the liberal and statesmanlike course, but it would have required the assent of Petrograd. One need not assume that it is vetoed for ever. What must be said to-day is not necessarily what will be said when the day of settlement comes. The dilemma is for the Entente peculiarly delicate. On the one hand there are few, if any, Englishmen or Frenchmen who would choose to fight in order to oppose the idea of a Polish kingdom. On the other hand to consent to any solution which permanently increases the military strength of the Central Empires is nearly impossible in the present condition of Europe. The dilemma is not to-day as sharp as it may become. The Polish Kingdom is as yet a mere phrase, and it is easy to argue, as most of our press does, that there will be no moral reality in this promised independence. If, however, the Poles should rally unitedly to the Austro-German solution, if the kingdom materializes as a genuine national state, and, above all, if Russian affairs remain in the hands of the present bureaucratic group, the idea of fighting on to ensure a Russian conquest of Poland would maintain itself in the west with difficulty.

There are two ways of escape from this dilemma. The first and the chief of them lies in the resolve that the new Europe shall not resemble the old. If we can realize the league of nations,

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if we can consign competing armaments and the struggle of the balanced Powers to the hideous past, then it need not be for us a matter of the first importance that the Poles should belong in a military sense to the Central Powers. If we can at all conceive this reformed and reorganized Europe, we shall cease to think primarily and instinctively in terms of military power.

The other way of escape would open before us, if our assent to a solution which seemed to ensure Polish liberty with some approach to reunion could be set off against adequate concessions by the Central Powers toward other peoples. If the French-speaking districts of Lorraine were restored to France, and the Italian Trentino to Italy, if the Armenian Vilayets were placed under Russian rule and the Turkish straits neutralized, if finally the Hapsburgs, at the moment when they received the Polish crown, would also remodel the Dual Monarchy on a federal basis, with a full promise of liberty to the Czechs, the South Slavs and the Roumans within it, there would be small reason to regret that the Poles were enjoying freedom "in the other camp." It is of course the corollary of such a settlement that it should recognize Germany's claim to economic expansion in Turkey and Africa. In a Europe thus rearranged, we should soon cease to think of "camps." Does such a scheme as this make too heavy a draft on the tolerance and goodwill of warring nations? Perhaps it does. But the logic of military events moves in the direction of a negotiated peace. Such a series of changes could disappoint nations at war only if they had forgotten the mood in which they went to war. In the early months of 1914 the realization of such a program as this would have seemed to most of us an approach to the millennium.

H. N. Brailsford.

London, November.

# Sovereignty and Centralization

It can never be too thoroughly emphasized that the founders of the American Constitution did not intend to create a complete system of government. They took the states for granted, and it was upon their complex foundation that they attempted to build. What they attempted was essentially its supplement, the binding together of certain strands which the withdrawal of British sovereignty had grievously untied. Yet, as the event was to show, it was no easy matter to achieve a working efficiency for the new instrument of sovereign power. If we can say to-day that the interests of the American nation are supreme, and that the old states' rights theory of sovereignty is largely obsolete, we have to remember that a Civil War was needed to give it its death-blow. For the Constitution was doubtfully imposed and regretfully accepted. Men found it difficult to understand that two jurisdictions largely coördinate can work towards a similar end. They imagined that coördination meant antithesis, and drew a distinction between state and nation. Antagonism not unnaturally resulted; for where men believe there is enmity, its appearance may with certainty be predicted. In the result we may utter our requiescat over the grave of localism.

Nationalism, then, is triumphant. The natural question any statute must now raise is not whether Missouri or Alabama will benefit from its enactment, but whether the United States will so benefit. But there is another aspect of this unified sovereignty about which certain doubts may be expressed. It stands for centralization; that is to say it changes the whole character of the federal idea. It may be, indeed, that this centralization is essential to the future of the United States. It may be that until the power of the latter undergoes a further concentration, it can never adequately be exercised. The interests of the whole may so uniquely transcend the interests of the parts as to give their separate claims little or no validity. Yet even an observer handicapped, as I am, by an alien tradition, cannot help but realize that there is in America a certain fundamental disunity of circumstance. When I am in Kansas, I know that I am not in New York. The problems, even the thoughts and the desires, are different and affect people differently. Is it wise to make Washington a kind of Hegelian harmonization of these differences and say that Congress can transcend them in a federal statute? In the result, as every statesman must know, what are called the "interests of the Republic" in New York will probably be called "discrimination against the Middle West" in Kansas. And that is intelligible, even if it is rarely praiseworthy. For while action in Kansas would have attempted to cope with the difficulties of the Middle West, action at Washington aims—since a balance of interests must be struck—at their genial evasion. Surely this suggests the existence of a problem which has aroused less attention than it deserves.

The growth of national government, with the consequent strengthening of its sovereign character,

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leads, as I have urged, to its increasing centralization. This is true not of America alone. The whole history of England, Maitland once remarked, could be brought under the rubric of the decline and fall of the sheriff. One of the resultant and fundamental problems Great Britain will have to face when its reconstruction comes is precisely this. Its local life will have to be made real. It will undergo revivification. Its units of local government will have to be made real. They will have to receive a sovereignty that is something more than an anaemic reflex of the central power. An interest in local problems will have to be aroused not less keen and vivid than the interest in national problems. Nor is this less true of France. Her local group-life has been sacrificed to the absorptiveness of Paris; with the result that since the fall of Napoleon France has been striving to regain the local creativeness now stricken with impotence. The vigorous self-government of the modern German city derives from the at any rate partial admission by higher authority that its powers, to be responsible, must be complete. It was there remembered, as in England and France it has been forgotten, that the tissue of the civic parts changes more frequently than the tissue of the national whole. Since in the latter countries an adequate nutrition of final responsibility was not provided, the result has been in a real sense death from starvation.

I know well enough that nothing like this stage has been reached in the United States. Yet the difficulty is ominously near. No kind of working compromise has been reached between the states on the one hand, and the federal government on the other. Each has gone its own way, often almost wilfully duplicating the work of the other. The state, it is assumed, must do what the federal government has not done; the federal government merely acts as the bracket to a series of algebraic symbols. The possibility of a coöperation is not considered. The lines of demarcation are never made plain. It is never adequately realized that both are overcrowded with business, that they cannot, with all the goodwill in the world, waste an ounce of energy in this complex age. Congress, of a certainty, cannot give proper attention to local problems. It is, moreover, all the more difficult to obtain a rapprochement with a Constitution uniquely inaccessible to amendment. It may be admitted frankly that the centralization of the modern federal government has won some tremendous victories. An Englishman needs no convincing that the victory won in 1865 for union, and, implicitly, for centralization, was a victory for the beneficent forces of the civilized world. He may well stand amazed at the quality no less than the volume of work performed by such centralizing agencies as the Interstate Commerce Commission. He has no doubts as to the past. It is about the future that he must feel uncertain.

For there are many able thinkers in the United States who are convinced that where national thought is, generally speaking, superior in quality to state thought, where it is temporally in advance, national, that is to say centralized action should follow. The sovereign, in fact, should show his powers of self-assertion. Where he is in possession of a progressive idea which fails to obtain sanction in a backward state, then he should use his reserve power in compensation for its reactionary character. It is, of course, easy to sneer at people who cling to the ideas of the mid-Victorian age. It is easier still to remember that there is outside the state government a federal power which pays no heed to regional opinion. State government and state opinion must, so the reformer urges, be overridden if progress is to be made.

A typical instance is that of prohibition. Reformers in Maine do not see why they should suffer for the stupid inability of New York to control its liquor traffic. Congress, they say, should legislate for the nation, and prevent either the enactment of anomalies, or the retention of so pathetic an ancestralism as a taste for beer. Now I waive the whole question of whether Maine does in fact benefit from its more acute perception; reputable authority assures me that the contrary is the case. But the real question to which I want an adequate reply—more convincing than rhetorical statements of the case for prohibition—is whether America will not gain more from the slow self-struggle of New York to intelligence, than from the irritating imposition from without of a belief to which it has not been converted. I cannot avoid the emphatic opinion that in this, as in other matters, nature is not saltatory. Politically we probably gain more from the slow, and often painful erosion of prejudice by education, than when we attempt its elimination by more drastic methods. It is, of course, annoying for those of us who consider we have found the truth; but if we are to have democratic government we must bear with the inconveniences of democracy.

The traditional separation of powers in American government has been assailed as often as it has been explained. Yet I believe it is in fact a natural division. Of course to lawyers like Professor Dicey, federalism of any kind appears but a step on the road to centralized government; it is, in his own phrase, the union which proceeds

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unification. I am a frank medievalist in this regard. It seems to me admirable that a country which, in certain aspects, is one, should yet adopt its governance to suit the severalty which is no less characteristic of other aspects. In a democracy, the surest guaranty of civic responsibility seems to lie in the gift of genuine functions of government no less to the parts than to the whole. No doubt, on occasion, the dissipation of sovereignty will result in conflict. But even without it there is conflict of a kind far more wasteful, since it in nowise depends upon principle. And anyone who reads the reports of the United States Supreme Court for the last twenty-five years will realize that the national powers have not been extended without opposition and that Washington has not always been victorious. What seems to me dangerous is that the expansion no less than the contraction of the central power should always have been planless and unthinking. It has depended always—witness the recent embarkation upon the governmental regulation of railway wages—upon the haphazard accidents of momentary events, instead of upon a scheme of considered and inherent policy. It has grown without thought of local needs or of local personality. Had the sovereign federation given respectful recognition to those other sovereigns, no less real, which we call the states, there would have resulted no less an impulse to creation than an economy of effort.

It is the fashion to regard federalism as the merest *pis aller* and to hope piously for the time when a more adequate centralization will render it unnecessary. This seems to me to neglect certain obvious lessons to be drawn from other experience. In education, for example, we have learned that the more pupils per teacher, the less efficient, on the whole, is the instruction. Commercially, Mr. Brandeis has shown that certain business units may become so large as to be physically incapable of successful administration. I would urge that a similar law of diminishing returns applies also to the sphere of government. It becomes more and more obvious that we must recognize certain natural units of political administration, but also see to it that we do not duplicate that power. It is admitted freely that the result will probably derogate from the unique sovereignty of the whole. Yet that is surely but a theoretical derogation from which no practical consequences ensue; and I am pragmatist enough to contend that it is therefore no derogation at all.

I can imagine no more fruitful political thinking than that which should attempt to read for our own day the due lesson of the failure of certain emperors who, because they took the whole world for their field of vision, gave Voltaire the material for the most admirable of his gibes. We seem in genuine danger of going back to an ancient and false worship of unity, to a trust in an undivided sovereignty as the panacea for our ills. Surely the vitality of political life depends rather on the conference of final responsibility where there is the willingness to assume it and the capacity to assume it wisely. Only thus can we prevent Washington from degenerating into Dublin Castle. In the end, maybe, the ways of attainment will be as difficult as the objects at which they aim; but the good of the universe is manifold and not single. We are as travelers breasting a hill, and we reach its summit by a thousand devious paths.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

# Chicago—December Fifth

THEY are at it again. Not content with the thrashing they got at Chicago, with the humiliation they endured during the campaign, the Progressive Republicans have started right in to repeat the same circle of disaster. Those who believe in signs will note that the thing begins again in Chicago. When I refer to Chicago, I am not thinking of the conventions. They merely consummated the obvious. I am thinking of the meeting held last January at which the Progressives committed themselves to anti-Wilsonism and thereby made themselves politically helpless. Once they had declared that the defeat of Mr. Wilson was a question of national honor and salvation, their threat of a third ticket was ludicrous, and their fighting power nil. For if to throw out Wilson was the paramount issue, how could the Progressives refuse to support any one who promised to throw him out? And since the Old Guard with its dull brain had figured out that the Progressives plus the Republicans were a million votes stronger than the Democrats, what on earth was the use of their conceding anything to the traitors of 1912?

Luckily for the progressive cause, there was a sufficient number of people who did not follow their leaders. These people were not obsessed with anti-Wilsonism, and by their votes they have managed to keep progressivism alive. They did it by showing that the progressive vote was not a negative prejudice, not a personal antipathy, that it sought positive ends, that it could not be unbalanced by echoes of the war, above all that it was incalculable. The rank and file was wiser than its leaders. By its long hesitation, by its refusal to commit itself till election day, it kept the party leaders guessing, and won a recognition commensurate with its strength and importance. By

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letting the Wilson Democrats know that the progressive vote could be won by progressive principles, it forced the Democrats to bid for it. It enabled the progressives in the Democracy to push their own reactionaries to the background, and committed President Wilson deeply to a progressive attitude. And yet, though the progressives reëlected Wilson, they did not mortgage their souls to his party. A vote that has shown it can form a new party in sixty days, can abandon that and elect a former opponent, is a dangerous and incalculable political power.

Dangerous and incalculable is what the progressives must be if they are to make their way against the hardened organization of the old parties. They must be elusive, surprising, hard to catch, and impossible to hold. They must scorn the entanglement of prejudice, and for the sake of mobility cast aside all those antique generalizations about the intrinsic virtues and vices of either party. The moment they begin to say that "permanent progressive advance through the Tweedledum party is impossible," or that the "Tweedledee party can best secure," they are lost.

This is what Messrs. Rowell, Gifford Pinchot, Robins, Garfield, White, and Ickes are now saying. They have issued a statement—date line Chicago, December 5th—announcing that the Democratic party is "impossible," that the Republican party can "best secure," and won't the Old Guard please create an Executive Committee of ten reactionaries and six progressives in order to promote social justice. I know what I would do if I were Mr. Penrose. I would say: "Certainly, you poor lambs, the new era has begun. We begin with patriotism, floods of it, crises, emergencies, national honor. We go on to recognize together the basic ineptitude, vacillation, and sectionalism of the Democrats. For the next three years we work ourselves up into a state of hysteria to prove that at all costs the Democrats must be beaten. Then we meet in convention. You get a plank urging a minimum wage for women workers in Alaskan restaurants. A few of you are put on the campaign committee. All of you are allowed to make speeches and contribute money, and whether you like it or not you will have to support the Republican ticket. But if you ask me for my candid opinion of you, as between man and man, I don't mind saying that you are too simple to play politics, and too good to play poker."

WALTER LIPPMANN.

# A Question of Quality

## Immigration in the Light of History: III

IT might be easy for anyone to agree with the presentation of the subject as thus far developed, to admit that the immigration in the years preceding the Revolution proportionally equaled and even exceeded both in extent and variety that of our own day, and still to object that the all-important difference remained as to kind and quality.

Perhaps the most frequent cry of the immigration alarmist relates to the changing character of our immigration in recent years. In the decade of 1880-1890 over 75 per cent of the incoming foreigners were from Germany, Scandinavia, and Great Britain, while only 17½ per cent were from Italy, Austria, Russia, and Poland; and this latter percentage was two or three times greater than for the ten years preceding. On the other hand, in 1907 these figures were almost reversed—76 per cent coming from the latter countries and less than 17 per cent from the former. In this connection President Lowell's words are sometimes quoted, that, "We have a better chance of rearing eaglets from eagles' eggs placed under a hen than from hens' eggs placed in an eagle's nest."

Without in any way minimizing the seriousness of the situation, it should be remembered that the time has been as yet too short to reach any conclusion. It is the next and the second generation that will tell the story of the new type of immigrant. In the meanwhile, the reports from our public schools which have come to the writer's notice are not unfavorable—and the public school is one of the greatest factors in assimilating the rising generations.

But the whole immigration question has taken on a new aspect since the publication by the Immigration Commission in 1910 of the results of the investigation carried on under the direction of Professor Franz Boas. In his report, "Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants," are recorded results from the measurement of a few thousand cases of two radically different types —the east European Hebrew and the Sicilian. The head form has always been regarded as one of the most stable and permanent race characteristics, and the above types were chosen because the one is a round-headed and the other a long-headed stock. The investigation shows such changes in the head form of children born in this country that the two stocks approach a uniform type, and the difference between the two stocks is

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less than the difference between the children and parents of either stock. Although Mr. Boas would be the last to claim any final conclusions from the rather limited number of cases examined, it is impossible not to agree with his comment, "and we are compelled to conclude that when these features of the body change, the whole bodily and mental make-up of the immigrants may change." In the face of these unexpected findings, the least that one can do is to suspend judgment. It looks, however, as if nothing were impossible in the way of absorption of European races—of Europeans, because we seem to be no more ready ethnically for the Oriental than we are for the Negro.

As soon as the possibility of absorption is accepted, every other phase of the question appears different and in general more favorable. One is more ready then, for example, to admit the claim, presented so clearly by Professor Commons, that so far as the production of wealth is concerned, the immigrants since the Civil War have contributed enormously. Over four-fifths of the immigrants being "in the prime of life, between fourteen and forty-five years of age . . . their home countries have borne the expense of rearing them up to the industrial period of their lives, and then America, without that heavy expense, reaps whatever profits there are on the investment."

A little farther on in his "Races and Immigrants in America" Commons points out some of the unfavorable features, showing how the employers of labor have played one race against another. In the competitive struggle, "each race comes from a country lower in the scale than that of the preceding, until finally the ends of the earth have been ransacked in the search for low standards of living combined with patient industriousness."

In its broader outlines there is a striking similarity to this situation in the period before the Revolution. The greatest need of the country in the early days was for settlers and laborers. Some of the colonies held out inducements in the way of cheap or even free land, and bonuses were offered to individuals or companies who would promote immigration. Transportation and emigration companies resorted to methods of persuasion that were similar to, and relatively as effective as those of the present. Such methods inevitably result in procuring quantity rather than quality.

Many excellent people were among the newcomers of the eighteenth century just as there are to-day, but the mass of them, as of practically every other large immigration, was of a lower social class. It is time that we got away from the tradition that the men who fought our war of independence and framed the present government of the United States were demigods whose servants even were of a superior class. Too many of the people who wanted to emigrate to America were so poor that they could not pay their passage money, and they were then provided for if they would pledge their services for a number of years on arrival in this country. This must have been profitable for the promoters, as shown by the extent to which it was engaged in, and from the fact that one reads of emigrants being trapped into signing these service bonds where it was not necessary.

This sort of advertisement in 1728 was not uncommon:

> Lately imported and to be sold cheap, a parcel of likely men and women servants.

Or one might read such an item as this of 1729:

> In New Castle government there arrived last year, says the Gazette, 4,500 persons, chiefly from Ireland; and at Philadelphia, in one year, 267 English and Welsh, 43 Scotch—all servants, 1,155 Irish, and 243 Palatines, of whom none were servants.

The price of German servants about that time was said to have been £10 apiece for five years of servitude.

These were the redemptioners of whom one reads so frequently, and McMaster says:

> The advertisements of redemptioners mention weavers, gardeners, spinners, carpenters, smiths, wheelwrights, shoemakers, and school teachers, stonecutters, bricklayers, tailors, hatters, harness makers—men and women skilled in every sort of labor then needed in the country.

When their terms had expired, these indentured servants might remain in their same situations on salary or wages, but the more enterprising and energetic of them would strike out for themselves. The most common practice was to take up new land. Jonathan Dickinson in a letter of about 1722 says: "Many who have come over under covenants for four years are now masters of great estates."

While settlers and laborers were wanted, it was possible for the supply to exceed the demand, and from some sections of Germany and Ireland the immigration became almost a stampede. No provisions had been made or could be made for any such numbers as we have seen were coming into this country. James Logan, Penn's agent, complained in 1725 that there were "as many as one hundred thousand acres of land possessed by persons (including Germans) who resolutely set down and improve it without any right to it." And he was at a loss how to dispossess them.

As the best way out of the difficulty, the author-

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ities in many of the colonies let the immigrants go, or sent them out, to the frontier where they could cultivate the wild lands and also serve as a buffer between their superiors and the Indians. They there served a useful purpose, but frontier life proved demoralizing. Deterioration was so rapid that we soon find charitable and missionary societies established in Europe for the support of religion and education, not among the Indians or even among the Negroes, but among these poor benighted whites in America.

Such elements in the population would present serious problems, and that the question of control was not an easy one is evidenced by Kercheval:

> It was customary for the Dutch, on St. Patrick's day, to exhibit the effigy of the saint, with a string of Irish potatoes around his neck, and his wife Sheeley, with her apron loaded also with potatoes. This was always followed by a riot. The Irish resented the indignity offered to their saint and his holy spouse, and a battle followed. On St. Michael's day the Irish would retort, and exhibit the saint with a rope of "sour krout" about his neck. Then the Dutch, like the Yankee, "felt chock full of fight," and at it they went, pell mell, and many a black eye, bloody nose, and broken head, was the result.

Nor is this all of the story. Robert Proud in describing the people who were coming into Pennsylvania between 1760 and 1770, after speaking of the Germans and Irish, said:

> There is another class of people, whose numbers here, in latter years, have annually so much increased as apparently to portend consequences no less dangerous and unhappy to the public good. . . . I mean such as flee from justice, in other countries, and convicts from Great Britain and Ireland; who frequently find the way hither, after they are landed in other places, to the no small detriment of the honest part of the community.

There is much food for thought in a simple statement by Crèvecœur, almost in the nature of an aside:

> From whence the difference arises I know not, but out of twelve families of emigrants of each country, generally seven Scotch will succeed, nine German, and four Irish. . . . The Irish do not prosper so well; they love to drink and to quarrel; they are litigious, and soon take to the gun, which is the ruin of everything.

While this is not to be taken as based upon statistics, it is important as a contemporary and probably a popular estimate, that only a little more than half of the immigrants succeeded.

Immigration may have been an economic factor of value in hastening the settlement of the new country, and it may have furnished labor that was as valuable in production as it has proved to be since the Civil War, but socially and politically the immigrants were regarded as of an inferior class and as a dangerous element in the community. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the best indication of the immigrants' position is shown by the political treatment accorded them. Our fathers met the situation boldly and in a way that might excite the envy of many of the present day. This was not a democratic country and these newcomers were not allowed to have what we should call an equal or a fair share in the running of the governments of the various colonies. By limitations of one sort or another, and by various arbitrary restrictions, the control of affairs was kept in the hands of the old order. With increasing numbers, it was only a question of time before the newer elements should insist upon recognition and better treatment, and in the ten or fifteen years preceding the Revolution a domestic struggle was in progress resulting in bloodshed in several instances, and rivaling in its ultimate importance the struggle for independence from Great Britain. Eventually this proved to be the decisive factor in establishing our American principles of equal rights and of representation upon the basis of numbers.

Finally, in order to approach anything like an adequate idea of the pre-Revolution immigration it is necessary to take the importation of slaves into account. Ever since the census of 1790 when we have our first accurate figures, the Negro population has been increasing, but the percentage of Negroes to the total population has steadily decreased, and has fallen to less than 11 per cent in 1910, none of which is the result of immigration. On the other hand, in the pre-Revolutionary period the Negroes were increasing both in numbers and proportions and by the time of the Revolution they amounted to 18 or 20 per cent. The importations were said to have been from 10,000 to 20,000 a year.

The Negro problem now is partly social, and that phase of it did not exist in the earlier times. The other aspects of it, however, that is of numbers, proportion, and economic value, although not necessarily recognized, were much more serious then than now. As the slaves were being so largely brought from abroad, they complicated the whole immigration problem, rendering it even more serious than it would otherwise have been, and unquestionably lowering the quality of the population as a whole. It was with this in mind that Channing's estimate of one-third of the population being foreign-born was accepted as a fair indication of the situation which the eighteenth century had to face.

MAX FARRAND.

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# Poetic Education and Slang

II

A TEACHER who was humble toward the poetry in his pupils' hearts might find a way to tell them what verbal poetry is, and all about the technique of its construction, without once opening a book or drawing them away for a moment from the fields of their own pleasure. For not only is the prevailing attitude of the senses poetic in childhood, but children are continually adopting and creating for their enjoyment poetic forms of speech. They surround themselves with an evolving paraphernalia of vivid and unnecessary expressions, by which they reinforce their joy in the strong flavor of life. It happens, however, that the finer discriminations of pleasure-quality which we call "taste," and "the sense of beauty," are not developed very early, and therefore this poetry of juvenile conversation is not usually exquisite, or even beautiful. It does not sound like the eloquent rendition of polite lyrics in a drawing-room. It sounds raw. It sounds like Shakespeare having a good time. And in a society which worships Shakespeare next only to God, there is no sin against propriety equal to that of introducing on one's own account some of Shakespeare's ways of having a good time. For this reason the rich fruitage of poetry that ripens continually in the playground of the young is never harvested, and the rank color and power of it rarely stains the pages of polite literature. Educators look down upon it as one of the things to be eradicated in preparing a child to take his place in a society whose principal ideal is elegance. But I think we may say without exaggeration that current slang contains more genuine and compelling poetry than current verse. And if there is one place in the world where children's appreciation of the motives which impel poets to use language as they do might appropriately begin, it is in this virile poetry of their own creation.

Just as we distinguish two ways of experiencing or perceiving things—the way of adjustment and the way of realization—so we can distinguish two ways of naming things. Things may be named with a practical name, which tells us what they are *for,* which classifies them for scientific or everyday purposes, or they may be named with a poetic name, which tells us what they *are,* what they feel like, which engenders in our sensibility a vivid awareness of their presence. An oriole, to take an extreme instance, may be called *icterus galbula,* or he may be called *fire-bird.* And wherever anything is to be identified with words a similar alternative arises. The words may indicate only a handy classification, or they may convey the taste of a quality in experience.

It is a custom for literary professors and professors of elegant virtue to tell their pupils that all slang is the result of indolence. We use a slang word, they say, merely because we are too lazy to think up the "correct" word. This casual and sweeping generalization is a result of indolence in these professors. A moment's studious examination of the subject-matter would show them that even among practical slang words the expressions which fill that hasty purpose of ignoring discriminations are exceedingly few, that fully half of the practical slang makes a new and valued discrimination in the child's environment, and that moreover more than half of all slang is not practical at all, but vigorously poetic in its intent, supplying a new creative word for a thing, or a quality, or a mood.

The words *bluff* and *crib* and *flunk,* for instance, are entirely practical. They are important items in the technique of school life. *Muff* and *hunch* are as ingeniously fitted into the mechanism of social life as any words. They are skilfully formed instruments.

*Pussyfoot,* on the other hand, is a verb of poetic quality. *Up-against-it* is more subtly so. *She's a gloom, he's a butter-fingers, a flannel-mouth, have a heart, start something, put your foot in it*—these expressions are all keenly poetic, and they are strong.* Of course, like all poetry that becomes established, they lose after a time their original vigor and come to be used automatically and with stale perception. But in that they do not differ from literary words, and the very fact that they are continually being changed bears witness to the power and prevalence of the motive which gave rise to them.

Professors ought to warn their pupils against using any expressions without discrimination and too habitually. But this is not warning them against slang, it is warning them against deadness. Indeed in the evolutions of baseball slang is to be found a most perfectly magnified example of the lively-minded person's determination *not* to use any expression after it has grown habitual. This poetic striving, mingled with a certain exaggerative humor, is what makes our baseball dialect grow more and more unintelligible to a layman.

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* Professor John Erskine, who teaches Shakespeare at Columbia University, said (in reviewing my book, "Enjoyment of Poetry") that the expression *zip it to the fence,* used in baseball stories to mean a home-run, is not the result of an impulse to realize. Applying the same old dogma that misguided him when he was a child, he said that such expressions, "like all slang, save us the trouble, not only of feeling but of thinking." I never could take this statement seriously, but I quote it here to show that English professors really can be as lazy and unpoetic in generalizing about this matter as I say they are.

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At first we say that the pitcher is *nervous*. But that is a worn-out expression. *His feet are not on the ground*—that too, however, is stale. *He's up in the air*. But that again becomes copied. *He's chasing the kite, he's aeroplaning his emotions,* and so on, until some perfectly unintelligible gibberish results, and we go back to the practical adjectives and begin the cycle again.

The determination of certain restaurant clerks not to name any dish by its practical name is worthy of any poet's emulation. "A dozen raw oysters," orders the customer. "Twelve alive in the shell," shouts the clerk.

"An order of rump steak rare," says another. "Slab of moo—let him chew it!"

Dante has just this manner of indicating the thing by its attendant circumstances. "I am one who left off singing hallelujahs," is Dante's way of saying, "I am a messenger from heaven."

For those who are not too refined to think, it must be evident that the technique of vividness here is the same, although the thing to be imagined is of so different a quality. And if the teachers of poetry would once recognize that everyone enjoys vividly realizing whatever he is interested in, and that poetry is the vivid realization through verbal agencies of *anything,* then they might consent to fall in with their pupils' own interests, at least for a while, and the whole attitude of childhood towards poetry would be revolutionized. Certainly there is some risk that children will fail to appropriate the wealth of the established language, if they satisfy themselves too continually with these passing forms. But they will never genuinely appropriate any language, if every native impulse to vivid utterance on their own part is choked off upon their lips as indolent or vulgar.

The other day I received from the principal of a girls' boarding-school a list of four hundred slang exclamations which she had gathered among her pupils; and though they were written down in wholly accidental order, it was impossible not to be reminded by their rhythms, as well as by the startling grammatic and pictorial figures they employed, of Shakespeare's verse. If you can escape for a moment from the continual burden society puts upon you of proving that you are not vulgar, and if you can elude the even more common misfortune of being unable to perceive what a thing is when it is familiar—come freshly and naïvely to these expressions as you do to those on the lips of Falstaff—you will not fail to sense this similarity.

Kiddo! Kiddo! Kiddo!
Come on, you big fat husk!
See if I care!
Dry up!
You poor It!
You crazy wop!
I've got your number!
Dry up and bust!
Beat it!
That's *punk!*
Put it over!
Cæsar's ghost!
I could spit ink!
Put that in your pipe and smoke it!
Go chase yourself!
Rave on, Lucy!
Do you get me, kid?
Button up your lip!
Get off the earth!
You Bonehead!
You Poor Boob!

The vigor of these utterances, I think, is what reminds us especially of Shakespeare; each one is an intellectual surprise, and rhythmically a shot out of a gun. I cannot see how any long-lecturing professor, once hearing these expressions ejected through the lips of a child, can have the audacity to call them indolent. They spring straight up from the fountain-source of all poetry—strong love of the taste of life and impulse to convey that taste in words.

Perhaps the best way to prove this to the professors will be to remind them that some of their own worthiest and most classic and respectable words are themselves, if we go back to their origin, just the same slangy vagabonds as these.*

Examine, for instance, the word *inveigh*. There is a staid and dignified term, fit to be incorporated in a President's inaugural:

"I will not at this time inveigh against the custom prevalent among my contemporaries—" You can imagine how it would sound. And yet—poetically—what does that word mean?

*In* means *into.*

*Vehi* means *to sail.*

"I will not at this time *sail into* my contemporaries"!

Here is another Latin word—*insult.* In its origin it meant *to jump on*—exactly what is said everywhere by the school-children of America when the appropriate situation arises.

*Diatribe* is a pretentious term. It implies something more thorough than an insult, a more lasting denunciation. You not only "jump on" somebody, but you "rub it in." And the Greek verb τρίβω means *to rub.*

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* The word *classic* itself is a Latin equivalent of the slang word, *classy.*

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We used to say of a crazy person that he was "off his trolley." And the word *delirious* meant substantially the same thing in an earlier stage of civilization. It came from the Latin words *de* and *lira,* which mean *off* or *out of your furrow.*

The word *precocious* means precooked, or, as we say, *half-baked.*

*Capricious* means *like a goat,* and the slang correlatives here are innumerable.

These are some of the parallels that may be drawn between the poetry of new-born language which young people enjoy as slang, and the poetry of settled language which is reserved for the enjoyment of professors of etymology. Imagine some worthy, refined and graduated soul, being offended by a young upstart, and responding somewhat as follows:

"It seems to me you are a trifle capricious. I would hardly expect any one to inveigh against me in this delirious manner, delivering such a diatribe. Is it essential to your precocity to insult your elders?"

And then suppose we translated this somewhat according to the etymological dictionary:

"You goat! You must be off your trolley to sail into me like that and then rub it in! Just because you're half-baked you needn't think you can jump on your elders!"

It is indeed a long way from the emotions which attend these youthful images to the exaltations of rhapsodic poetry. But the verbal technique of vivid realization is the same all the way. It is the same throughout all conversation and literature, and it can be learned and appreciated in whatever field one's interests wander. The true poet, moreover, is not altogether alien to any field, for he is characterized by a universal love of being. Just as the child is eager to taste the flavor of what is painful, or shocking, or disgusting, so the poet loves to explore and savor in his imagination every quality of sensation, or emotion, or action, or idea which presents itself to his attention. He drinks the whole universe. And his verbal art does not reside in the naming of any particular kinds of things, nor in any elegant delicacy in the naming; it resides in discovering and applying to every thing the words that bring into focus its naïvely perceived nature. Poetry is the art of the living name, and it flourishes in profanity and vituperation as truly and luxuriantly as in the sublimest ranges of the spirit's aspiration. It is the art of staying awake all the time, of preserving, throughout the ravaging humdrum of business and custom and decorum, a spirit fresh and all alive to the world. Surely our education in this art ought not to put us to sleep.

MAX EASTMAN.

# American "Society"

## I

THE Illinois Indians are said to have had no other name for themselves but *Illinois,* a word meaning men, "as if," adds their historian, "they looked upon all other Indians as beasts." Somewhat similar, I think, is the popular use among us of the indefinite term "Society," society written with a capital and between quotation marks. In both cases there is an assumption of the supreme value of a group of persons or of activities. It is this paramount or egocentric society life, not life in society, I am to describe. Lacking a precise terminology I shall have to make use of such expressions as "society life," "in society," "society woman," "society man." These allocutions are of course merely short-cuts. The society man is as non-existent as the economic man of the past or as the German man we talk of to-day. Nor is the society life itself ever completely detached from life at large—except in the society notes in the newspapers.

I am to describe society life in its American setting. No modern community, I surmise, is as yet without a society life. There is no community but what gives ceremonial parties or prescribes ways of meeting, and in all such organized social contact or entertainment there are undoubtedly a sufficient number of principles of selection and of leadership to constitute within the group at large a society group. But differentiations in principles exist and in details the psychology of society groups varies. Hence London "Society," "Society" in Rome, in Vienna, in New York. The society life of New York differs somewhat no doubt from that of Chicago, the society life of San Francisco differs from that of Philadelphia, but these differences I shall ignore and attend only to the common traits of society life in the United States.

The foremost distinctive character of this society life is its composition, it appears to me, on the basis of effectual desire. The society group of any American community is composed of persons who are sufficiently desirous to be in the group, in society, to pay the entrance fee, so to speak, and the fees to sustain membership. By these fees I mean, of course, psychologic adaptations, not pecuniary contributions.

Not that adaptations or performances costing money are not expected of those in society. Comparatively few persons can belong to society without having some source of revenue. Without means of their own they must be kept by some one—by a father or a husband or a wife—for their costs of getting about, of dress, of "paying back," must be met. Now and then in the larger cities may be found a small class of men who get their living out of being in society, men who dine out for the sake of the dinner. But there are so many easier ways of earning a dinner than by making yourself agreeable at one that this society bread line is never long. At best the position of this type of diner-out is insecure. The society position of persons in general with either a limited or an uncertain income is also somewhat insecure. Unless they are exceptionally industrious from a society point of view, exceptionally available or useful, they are readily relegated to the group of persons whom one knows but who are not fashionable. An assured social position requires an assured and a comparatively large income. It requires too the spending of that income in certain conventional ways: a society woman or man must live up to her or his position. This does not mean necessarily expenditure for the direct

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amusement of others in society. Once at least a social position is secured, society people do not need to entertain, on any scale, either large or small, but spending in elaborate or conspicuous ways is expected of them. They are supposed to keep a yacht or a racing stable, to patronize the arts, to build a hospital or to found a university.

It may be said, therefore, that conspicuous expenditure, or, to use Veblen's term, conspicuous waste, is a desideratum if not a requisite of a stable social position. At any rate it is evident that the society life is more concerned with the processes of consumption than with those of production. Not that it is not economically advantageous to certain types of producers to be in society. For real-estate men, brokers of various kinds, for house decorators and certain architects, for portrait painters and drawing-room musicians it is good business to be in society; their best customers are there. For other groups, for college presidents, let us say, or for lawyers, the advantage of being fashionable is not unmixed. College presidents and lawyers have to do with a large number of persons who are not only outside society but who never expect to get into it. When such persons form the bulk of one's *clientèle,* as in the case of physicians, of clergymen, of politicians, it may be a positive disadvantage to be reputed a society man; an unfashionable patient or parishioner or voter may resent the classification. Even to be possessed of a fashionable wife, even to be in society thus vicariously, a privilege sometimes allowed the college president or the lawyer, is a dangerous indulgence for a doctor of medicine or divinity or for a statesman.

On the whole, although there are persons in society who are economically on the make, although the element of business in "Society" contributes to its dulness, as Mr. Chapman long since pointed out, it is fair to state, I think, that "Society" does not gratify to any considerable extent economic desires, i. e. the desires of subsistence. Without a society life people would be as well off economically as with it, perhaps more so. Their consumption might be more in accordance with their personal comfort and tastes. In fact we sometimes see the desire to spend one's income to suit oneself rather than to suit "Society" competing successfully against the desire to get into "Society" or to stay in "Society." Living contrary to one's tastes, the high cost of "Society," is now and again rebelled against—by men.

What of the other primal human desire, the sex desire, does American society life contribute to its gratification? Society life appears to favor the sex desire even less than the desire for subsistence. "Society" sometimes functions as a marriage market, but it does not welcome lovers. That men and women fall in love in society is merely evidence that they can fall in love anywhere, that lovers know no obstacles. Prudent lovers, however, withdraw their love affairs from the society life as far as they can. According to circumstances they may be described as too domestic to want to go out or as afraid of scandal.

A society man will carry on his love affairs not only outside of "Society" but even with women who do not belong to "Society." A society woman for whom this meandering is more difficult may forego love-making altogether. I suppose that kind of negation is generally easier for a woman at any rate than for a man. A society woman is like the saloon keeper who does not drink; she knows that to one in her position love-making has particular risks, risks not only for the love affair itself but to her position. So she eschews it. In philandering or in flirting she seeks a substitute, a substitute not only innocuous but in so far as it provides her with retainers a society asset.

It is notable here as in other connections that the sexes play different rôles in the society life. Women are the leaders, men their followers or their backers. Society means more to women, as we say, than to men. It appears to satisfy desire more fully in women than in men—for women it satisfies the desire for achievement and the desire for prestige, i.e., it gratifies ambition. Whether or not this is due merely to the reason that men have other means of gratifying ambition, more attractive means, I do not attempt to say. The fact is that men do satisfy their desires for achievement and for prestige in other ways. The fact is too that women who satisfy those desires in other ways are apt to lose or never to acquire "social" ambition.

To be attractive to women a society life must impart a sense of achievement. Staying in society as well as getting into it must be arduous and calling for enterprise and skill. The American society life answers these requirements. That art of conspicuous wasting it relies upon is in itself exigent. Other "social duties" are laborious, often exhausting. They require a kind of self-devotion which verges on asceticism. They appeal to the energetic and the self-denying spirit of the American woman. Take the ceremonial, for example, of leaving cards. Afternoon calling gives a woman, I believe, a quasi-mystical sense of acquiring merit. I remember driving one lovely spring afternoon in Washington with a lady who was leaving cards. She paid little or no attention to the charms of forsythia or maple-tree blossoms, but each of the twenty-five calls she made appeared to give her the kind of satisfaction a Catholic or a Buddhist takes in telling the beads on his rosary.

The ceremonial of calling has reached its apogee, I suppose, in Washington. So has "dining-out." But outside of Washington the "dinner party," if not "social calling," affords women opportunities for self-exhaustion and for the concomitant feeling of accomplishment. That the strain of entertaining is severe we may infer not only from the run-down condition of the society woman at the close of the season but from the alacrity with which she sometimes goes to Europe or goes into mourning, her social responsibilities for the time being suspended by circumstance. She welcomes the chance of not "going out" without losing caste.

The routine of dining-out and of elaborate consumption in general is fatiguing, but so is cotton-spinning. Possibly the life of the steeple-jack is as trying as that of the social climber. The "social caller" might be even more exhausted at the end of the afternoon had she been calling as an agent for a charity society. In other words an enterprising woman could find other jobs just as hard as paying calls or putting in an appearance or cultivating desirable acquaintances, jobs as hard if not harder. Arduousness is not the only charm, then, attaching to "social duties." To be attractive social duties must be more than merely wearing. What other character must they have? Obviously enough they must bring prestige.

Prestige does attach to the society life. Why? Because its activities are those of elaborate consumption, Mr. Veblen would tell us, and the ability to consume wastefully has always brought prestige, be the consumer an Indian rajah, a giver of potlaches on the Northwest Coast or a plutocrat in other parts of America. True, but in so far as not all lavish consumers are in society, in the United States at least, there must be another source of prestige

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besides wasteful consumption * attaching to the society life. This source, I take it, is exclusiveness. Exclusiveness is the greatest of all factors in making any group prestigeful—exclusiveness makes royalty prestigeful to commoners, the church to laymen, men to women, elders to their juniors. It is upon its exclusiveness that the society life most depends for its charm and for its power. By keeping people out it makes them want to get in. Wanting to get in they become willing to comply with the entrance conditions, entrance conditions first of a comparatively large circle and then of circles within circles. To be in society is one thing, to be in smart society is another thing. But in either case the entrance conditions are largely conformity to the standards set by those within, standards, as we have noted, of consumption, but also non-economic standards in special modes of living, of dressing, of eating, of talking, of feeling and of thinking, and first and foremost standards of exclusiveness, i.e. of willingness to exact conformity of others. Obviously we are dealing here, are we not, with caste psychology, with a caste complex? As in any caste in India or elsewhere, in "Society" conformity is required in matters of dress, of food (eating in accredited places or having food served in accredited ways), in matters of shelter or of place of shelter (living in fashionable streets or fashionable parts of town, going for the season or the summer to fashionable resorts), in matters of language, of occupation, and of mating.

Conformity is as necessary in this American caste as in castes elsewhere, but between it and other castes there are two important distinctions. The first distinction is one that keeps us as a rule from recognizing this social classification as a caste at all. Since its membership is composed on a basis of effectual desire, as we have noted, made up of persons possessed of fitting desires and free from desires that might embarrass or complicate, the caste appears exempt from some of the more blatant forms of caste rigidity, from the rigidity of membership through birth, for example, or through family connection. In the same family can we not see one brother in society and another in the church or in the army, one sister the height of fashion and the other described as too serious or too literary or too artistic to enjoy going out, a decent paraphrase for her outcasting?

The second distinction about this particular American caste has to do with sex. This American caste requires a far lower degree of conformity from its men than from its women. I do not recall ever sitting at a dinner party next to a barber or dancing at a smart ball with a barkeeper, but on the whole occupation taboos are much lighter upon men in society than upon women. So are dress taboos. An unfashionably dressed man is put up with. So is a man who lives in a cheap lodging in an obscure street. So is a man who ordinarily uses correct English or occasionally eats in an unfashionable restaurant, or even in a fashionable restaurant with unfashionable friends. In women these offenses are hardly tolerated. For it is the women in society who are responsible—not that the men are given greater freedom theoretically, they are merely more negligible. It matters less what they do. The society woman must live according to the rule she makes because she counts. For her, *noblesse oblige*. As for the men, there are no kings in American "Society"—there are only queens. American "Society" is a gynocratic caste, a woman-controlled caste.

ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS.

* If Veblen had been more attentive to American facts he would not have underestimated woman's direct part in wasteful consumption. To him she is ever the vicarious consumer. In American life, at least, it is her will to power and not primarily that of her male supporter that is gratified by elaborate consumption. The average American woman wants to be in society, and she knows that the more elaborate her consumption the better chance she has to satisfy this social ambition. Is this not one clue, at least, to our high cost of living?

# CORRESPONDENCE

## Marxian Economics Unsound

SIR: The fate of the Socialist party, as debated in your issue of December 2nd, raises a big question, but not a new one. The present situation has long been latent, although only now revealed. Kindly grant space upon it to one who for thirty years has voted with the Socialist party, although never during that time being able to enter it. The significant fact is that for many years some nine-tenths of the Socialist vote has come from those in the same predicament as the writer—unable to swallow the narrow creed which is placed as a bar to membership in and reform of the Socialist party. This fact is eloquent of the wide dissonance between the party's policy and that rising tide of popular protest against commercialism in America of which it is supposedly the political expression. For this protest it has hitherto constituted the only outlet. To date this protest has been the party's main support. The Socialist vote in America has never been a vote for Marxian socialism; it has been a vote against commercialism.

As much as a year ago Mr. Hillquit himself devoted an entire evening before the Intercollegiate Socialist Society to an indictment of the Socialist party and its methods, closely along the lines followed by Mr. Simons. Both he and Mr. Simons recognize the party's un-Americanism. But neither of them condemn at all the errors of principle which lie deeper than mere methods, personalities or phrases, but which explain the presence of all these. Mr. Hillquit closed his criticism with an impassioned appeal for a return to first principles, and Mr. Simons virtually does the same. Yet neither recognizes that the details which they condemn are but the natural fruit of economic principles which are erroneous, un-American and futile. Yet this indictment is urged by one, the writer, who all his life has believed, and still believes, in the early abolition of all commercialism. Mr. Simons says that the party's failure is due to its shallow expediency and greed for votes. But how can this explain defeat? The two old parties are infinitely more shallow and expedient, yet they have gained while the Socialist party has lost. The fact is that it is Marxianism itself which is basically unacceptable to American voters. Here and today, Marxianism is broadly inconsistent with the facts. Whether Marxian socialism ever truly represented European economics I cannot say, but certain it is that since "Das Kapital" was written the whole commercial world in America has become revolutionized away from the philosophies which Marx and his followers have set forth.

You editorially back the urgings of Mr. Simons that the Socialist party be made more American. But how can this be accomplished without the abandonment of all the archaic economic philosophies so widely at variance with American history and present fact?

Broadly and briefly, the orthodox Socialist beliefs are these:

(1) Everything turns upon wages. Higher wages mean welfare for the workingman, and lower ones his loss.

(2) Economic class-lines must be drawn between the

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wage-earner and those whose income takes some other form. All who do not earn wages are a burden upon those who do.

(3) It is in his wages that the workingman is exploited. The difference between wages and market-price goes to the employer. That is, the poor are poor by the amount that the rich are rich. The struggle is between wage-earner and employer.

(4) Ergo, the class-struggle, however undesirable, constitutes a step toward socialism. The workman can rise only by class-struggle. The poor need only exert sufficient pressure upon the rich, and the rich will disgorge, making the poor rich.

(5) This pressure is to be exerted by the wage-earners as a class, through the ownership and control by them of all the tools of industry.

(6) American progress has consisted in a gradual centralization of ownership and employment.

(7) Political action is competent to reverse all these symptoms and effect socialism.

But the facts in America, whatever they may be in Europe, are directly inconsistent with every one of these theories, as follows:

(1) Wages (in money) are no factor in welfare. Real wages are paid in things, not in money; and the history of the last century has always shown wages-in-things lowest when wages-in-money were highest. When socialism has been accomplished wages will be lower than now, instead of higher; but they will buy several times as much.

(2) Wages do not determine class-lines between exploiter and exploited. Many, many wage-earners are themselves a part of the economic burden on the poor. Many employers are producers.

(3) It is not in his wages or at the factory that the workingman is exploited. If every employer turned socialist tonight, turning tomorrow's gross income into wages, the condition of the poor would be only slightly and temporarily ameliorated. The workingman is exploited at the shop-counter, not at the factory.

(4) Every step in the class-struggle makes the poor poorer. Every rise in wages, whether won by strike or otherwise, is paid by other workingmen, not by the employer. For eighty years wages have been rising steadily. If wages came from the employed that class must have become steadily poorer; but they have steadily become richer.

(5) No amount of control by wage-earners can affect this in the slightest. Only the consumer has power over the rich, for all commercial incomes come from the consumer, and from him alone.

(6) Ownership has been gradually decentralized during the last sixty years. Huge consolidations and accumulations have plainly been going on, it is true; but this will produce centralization only if the total amount of business remains constant. As a matter of fact, the continual crop of new properties has always outrated consolidation. The trouble with the land to-day is not too much centralization, but the costly anarchy of too little centralization, leading to exaggerated costs in commercial competition.

(7) Political action is futile—except as an expression of public opinion. There exists to-day nowhere on the face of the globe, in the constitution of any government, the power to remedy commercialism. For that lies only in the dollars of the consumer, as they cross the shop-counter; and these are as unorganized, as unrecognized, even by those who possess them, as were the political rights of the people two centuries ago. It is because this totally new power of government must be dredged up from the abysses of the unknown in history that an economic revolution commensurate with that which secured political democracy is inevitable before socialism can be secured. And when it comes it will have as little connection with any direct, conscious effort of the people to gain the particular right obtained as was always the case in these earlier revolutions for political democracy.

The simple, childlike philosophy of the orthodox Socialists, in seeing the rich merely as having something belonging to them and in starting to secure it by direct attack, is an exact parallel with the political faith of Germany, in her reliance upon force as the solution to every problem and upon ascendancy as the sole basis for happiness. How totally, absurdly un-American is all this tragic folly only Americans can appreciate. Only when the Socialist party has reformed its economic ideas into conformity with American facts, only when it has ceased to exclude all new membership which disagrees with its orthodoxy, which thus might bring progress and reform, can its methods and personalities come into accord with American historic ideals, bringing success with American promptness. Only then can they come into accord with American facts, bringing certainty and stability, and into accord with America's unchanging spirit of democracy—the reliance always upon action by the whole people, excluding every suggestion of class, bringing purity and permanence of liberty.

SIDNEY A. REEVE.

New York City.

## For Socialist Liberalism

SIR: THE NEW REPUBLIC for December 2nd was an extraordinary issue and especially good were the editorial and the article by Mr. Simons on "The Future of the Socialist Party." Is not really the Socialist party very often influenced by foreign and un-American ideas? I am absolutely in agreement with the editor that the Socialist party needs a thorough house cleaning. First, the Socialists of the United States must abandon the old dogmatic delusions *that the conditions of the Capitalist system are the same all over the world, that the working masses are just as badly exploited in Russia as in the United States,* forgetting or deliberately ignoring the fundamental characteristics of each nation, political, intellectual, historic, religious, etc.

It is absurd that a Socialist party of a monarchic Russia or of a militaristic Germany should pursue the same methods of propaganda as a Socialist party of a democratic country like the United States.

The Socialist party must become a national, a genuine American party. It should not concentrate all its activities in industrial centers ignoring such big groups of our society, as the middle, professional classes.

There is a great mass of people who are discontented, who realize that there is something fundamentally wrong with our abnormal system and who would like to see a radical change—people of all classes—and who would gladly listen to the philosophy of socialism—if it were intelligently presented to them.

The Progressive party polled a vote of almost 4,000,000 four years ago. Where have the votes gone this year? They were cast for Wilson—because he was the most progressive man in the field. Wilson received between two and three million votes which were not democratic but non-partisan. They were cast by people who believe in progress and liberal legislation and who thought Wilson was the right man. There were a good many near Socialists among them. If Benson had conducted a more rational campaign—if he had

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not made militarism the only issue of his campaign—thus making the people think that the Socialist party is merely a pacifist party—but had discussed American conditions from a socialistic standpoint, then a good many of the Wilson votes would have been cast for him.

But Benson ignored the issues which were for Debs the main issues: high cost of living, unemployment, social insurance, shorter hours, regulation of wages, labor legislation, etc. Benson's campaign was absolutely un-American and no wonder that the American voters preferred Wilson. Debs was running at a time when a Progressive party was in the field and yet he doubled his party's vote.

The Socialist party can only succeed when it becomes a constructive, a reformative and above all a nationalistic political party voicing the needs of the people. In the educational field, however, it should continue its philosophic and economic theories, it should organize various educational forums: there international problems will be discussed. But a philosophy must not be a political issue because at present the people are not ready for it. In one word, the Socialist party ought to continue its energetic propaganda of socialism only in the educational field—as a non-political organization—while on the political side it must become a genuine, constructive party.

Also I agree with the editor that the Socialist press must become a little better. A press that is voicing a new philosophy, a press which is fighting for a human and rational system—must not become as commercialized as the rest of the yellow press. The Socialist press must have the best literature, the finest information. Truth must be the fundamental motto.

There is no reason for the Socialists to be discouraged. The sentiment for reforms is growing rapidly; the sentiment for transformation of our chaotic capitalistic system is evident in all spheres of our society. The Socialist party has a good future in America.

MICHAEL ALTSCHULER.

## For Proletarian Party

SIR: While the editors of THE NEW REPUBLIC may not regard it as complimentary, it is true nevertheless, that your magazine performs the function that a genuine Socialist paper should perform. It is critical of contemporary life without being emotionally intoxicated. At the same time it is critical of the organization which seeks to remedy the conditions. Your issue of December 2nd excelled in both these regards. The reforms advocated in your editorial "How Can the Socialist Party Live," though highly speculative have the merit of being based on genuine defects of the organization. However, in a blundering way, the Socialist party has sought to improve itself in the manner suggested, and in so far as they have carried out the policy, their membership has diminished.

Mr. Simons, in "The Future of the Socialist Party," is perhaps a little too anxious, yet he has shown keen penetration in analyzing the situation and has made some wonderful generalizations. Many workingmen, like myself, have given up their activity in the Socialist party on account of the influex of academicians, preachers, middle-class politicians, and the Home Rule Irish, with their preachments and tricks to foster middle class morality. To-day, they are the dominant factor in the Socialist party, almost to the exclusion of the workingman's influence. Mr. Benson was an anachronism—muckraker, with a socialist label. The Chicago party is owned, body, boots and breeches, by academic down-and-outs, clientless lawyers, and the Home Rule faction of the Catholic Irish.

Of course, these misfits should have a forum to air their grievances, but workingmen who fully realize that their labor is bought and sold on the market in exactly the same way as "pig-iron, chewing gum and bibles," will not long consent to furnish the excuse and the means of their furthering their political ambitions. And lastly, Mr. Editor, workingmen are not interested or at best, only sympathetically interested, in the cause of Home Rule, the progress of the German arms, or the inroads of Modernism among Catholics, and whether or not Mr. Kennedy, in 1917 A.D., retains his seat in the City Council.

SAMUEL W. BALL.

Chicago, Illinois.

## Need for Congressional Record

SIR: Mr. Dickinson's article in your issue of November 25th on "Abuse of the Franking Privilege" (a thorough and interesting description of an annoying "symptom") does not diagnose the unfulfilled need which underlies the abuse. Just as our modern psychotherapy has penetrated into the hidden causes of so-called "evil" and shown how we must ascertain the unfulfilled desire and find some legitimate outlet for it, so surely we have made sufficient strides in social psychology to avoid our old "reform" method of merely describing and decrying irritating symptoms in our political and social system.

In the same issue there is an interesting account of the remarkable work of Robert Valentine, whose success is well attributed to the fact that he sought to go to the roots of every situation. If, penetrating the surface manifestations, we search for the unfulfilled need which has caused the "abuse," which, following the analogy of personal psychology, is merely the "compromise" an inadequate outlet has forced, we shall find it, I believe, in this case in the necessity of providing our politicians with some means of getting their ideas and propaganda across to their constituents—surely a necessity in a democracy. In addition to the lack of facilities accorded the legislator to enable him to keep in touch with and educate his constituents, there is the thoroughly unsatisfactory provision for the propaganda of candidates, particularly in large constituencies. An unfair advantage is given the rich man or the man who can get the support of the party machine—surely an unsatisfactory arrangement in a democracy. Because of lack of proper means of filling these needs we thus have on the one hand such an abuse of the franking privilege as is described and on the other hand the influence of private capital on politics owing to the necessity of enlisting its support in order to finance any candidacy.

How are we to provide adequate vehicles to meet this purpose? Here is a subject dealing with the technique of democracy which should be thought through and constructively treated. To throw out some raw suggestions, might not in the first place a printing and franking privilege be frankly accorded to legislators under proper restrictions and legislation? Also could not some free method of reaching the public, possibly through a publicly supported journal or publicly maintained halls, be available to prospective candidates? Valid difficulties and objections may spring up in one's mind to such suggestions, but it is certainly well that it be recognized that we have an important question here, which has been neglected.

SAM A. LEWISOHN.

New York City.

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# After the Play

THERE is one resident in these parts who cannot easily be Chinified. Only last week, on seeing "The Century Girl," I complained of a congested imagination. Now I have seen "The Yellow Jacket" and I repent. Last week I craved for suggestion as opposed to statement. Now I have had suggestion, just one Celestial suggestion after another, and I yearn for statement as plain as Omaha and as tough as Butte.

Perhaps my expectations were raised so high that actuality was bound to dash them, but only for a few moments, rowed by the bamboo poles, did "The Yellow Jacket" succeed in floating one in what the program calls "exotic joy." For the rest I knew not joy, either exotic or endemic. I knew only a mild discomposure, and a fear as to the consequences of not really liking something which truly normal persons all seem to like. Seldom, indeed, had I heard any drama praised so much as "The Yellow Jacket." Men and women went to it night after night when it was produced some years ago. It won a unique place in the grateful memory of the playgoer, had a true victory of esteem. But despite all urging that my imagination should float, "under the direction of the Chorus, into the realms of delightful fancy and laughter," I stuck in the mud. This brute fact cannot be evaded. And—though one thinks of these things afterwards—I propose to argue why my imagination failed to float, why I slowly slid out of that position where one lies in delicious ease, commander of the sky and the birds of the sky, into a prosaic perpendicularity where one discovers the impossibility of a medium too weak to support one, and too solid to inhale.

"The Yellow Jacket" is an original romance composed by George Hazelton and Benrimo, in the Chinese spirit, so that Chinese theatrical conventions as to action and scenery and music and direction can be employed for the sake of their suggestion to the fancy of the Occidental. The quaintness of Chinese usage, of Chinese simplicity and literalness and playfulness, appealed deeply to the authors, and Mr. and Mrs. Coburn revived the production in the faith that it really had faëry delicacy and charm. The charm was no doubt felt partly to consist in the romance itself, the tale told in poetized language; but it was felt also to inhere in the Chinese way of doing things, of representing death and heaven, for example, of representing combat and travel and all the other things that make for tedium or ugliness on our own stage.

With faëry in mind, I imagined "The Yellow Jacket" was going to be as freshly untheatrical as a performance by the Irish Players. I thought the writing of it was going to be beautiful as any fresh romance is beautiful, as Synge is beautiful in "The Playboy" or Maeterlinck in "Pelleas" or Yeats in "The Land of Heart's Desire." I did not know how its Orientalism would give esctasy, but such conventionalizations as I had ever imagined, mild though they were, promised a great deal from conventionalization in a thorough sense. There was no limit conceivable to the genuine dispensing with accessories, the use of a table for a palace, and a chair on a table for a mountain, and a lifting of the leg for a horse With richness in the story, keenness in the emotion aroused by the story, the possibilities of the Chinese method seemed endless. But it depended, as I imagined it, on the intensity of the drama itself, and I supposed "The Yellow Jacket" to be so full of poetic suggestion that the mere wave of a hand would open the door on multitudinous image and sound.

In the story by George Hazelton and Benrimo, then, I found myself bewildered. It was a story so written as to be pretentious rather than imaginative, flossy rather than poetic, a tissue of words that had to be mouthed to escape banality, and in being mouthed became dull. There are some people, of course, who are wafted afar at the very word Orient, who swim at a phrase into "a river of silvery love on which we can see the flower-boat pass among the lotus flowers." But my impression is one of Vantine's, surrounded by Le Gallienne sauce. It is picturesque but not intensely imaginative. I get no persuasion that I am not in a theatre, watching mere new-fangled make-believe.

It was the deliberate, the accentuated quaintness, of "The Yellow Jacket" that did most to prevent my floating into fanciful realms. Mr. Arthur Shaw was the realistically bored Property Man, but for all the humor of his nonchalance he seemed to me to be bawling it, to be taking not the slightest risk of a gesture or posture missing effect. He was in a relation of quaintness not merely to his audience, which was desirable, but to his function on the stage, which was incredible. He was an unbelievable Property Man. He did not believe in himself as a Property Man, any more than Mr. Coburn believed in himself as a Chorus.

The audience may be to blame. Probably at first "The Yellow Jacket" was performed with delicacy, with a constant conviction on the part of the performers as to their picture of life. Once the audiences failed to respond to these gestures, failed to take the second-story heaven as Chinese take it and failed to have emotion about the story owing to insistence on the antic, then the performers, in all likelihood, became content to rub the novelty in. Now, so far as I can judge, there is no true suggestion about "The Yellow Jacket." A woman may properly exclaim, "It's the cutest thing I ever saw. Don't you think the Property Man is perfectly killing? Don't you think his cigarette is positively darling? Don't you think the hangings are too lovely for words? From the Louis XIV Shop. Don't you just adore the whole thing?" But apart from gratitude to Miss Beatrice Prentice as Autumn Cloud and Mr. George Farren as the Farmer and Mr. Kyle as the old Philosopher and Mr. Bruning as the Purveyor of Hearts and Mr. George Gaul as the hero and Mrs. Coburn's baby, "The Yellow Jacket" left no sense of beauty experienced, of anything but Chinese quaintness capitalized and peddled to the Occidental with musical sentimentality and a few touches of grace and imagery and wit.

"The Yellow Jacket" has become a kind of shibboleth in the New York theatre. It is regarded as almost excruciatingly artistic, the sort of thing that Philistinism cannot appreciate, the sort of thing that must be encouraged and supported and "saved." Perhaps there was a time when it was a poor little blue-gilled baby, when an incubator had to be built around it and people had to protect its life. But now, seeing that rescue-work has been performed and the obtuseness of regular managers circumvented, I venture to confess my dissents. If one could never see work on the stage such as Mme. Bernhardt's company performs in "Hecuba," one might say *nunc dimittis* after "The Yellow Jacket," contrasting it favorably with things like "Flora Bella" or "The Guilty Man" or "Under Sentence" or "The Man Who Came Back." But that is not the alternative. It is not ravishingly satisfactory. It is not honestly enough conceived, or trustfully enough projected, or competently enough performed, to be worth sanctioning as an entirety. One can only deal in such sanctions if one has a harem-like heart.

F. H.

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# A Vanished Arcadia

*Private Correspondence of Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, in two volumes. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. $10.*

IT is not in books that the art of government is to be found. Its subtleties are too finely fashioned to be capable of direct transference to the printed word. What for the most part aids us is the knowledge of how men have reacted to its problems. For the value of history consists very largely in the persistent nature of the issues that confront each age. Only the perspective is altered; and it is difficult at any given moment to perceive the minutiae of distinction. History is not episodic and it is in the slow passage of tremendous forces that we catch a glimpse of its secrets. We catch that glimpse as we survey the thoughts of men. The biology of their thoughts, the record of their ideals—these are the keynotes of our progress. For the rest it is a continuous and constant material with which the statesman is called upon to deal.

It is from the chance documents that survive the destruction of time that we depend for our reconstruction of the past. An anecdote, an odd fragment of autobiography, the angry note in a private diary—these are the background of much modern historical work. Their value is the contemporaneous character they possess. They are the record of immediate impression taken down before the event has had time to secure the rightness of historical judgment. To such material Lady Granville has made a very notable contribution in resurrecting this fascinating correspondence. No papers since those published from the material at Bropmore by the Historical Manuscripts Commission throw so vivid a light on the Revolutionary and Napoleonic era from the standpoint of aristocratic England. The letters are valuable not because their writers—with the exception of Canning—were particularly distinguished people. A great lady of fashion, a rather grim but powerful landed proprietor of ancient lineage, a wife of deeply religious sentiment, a younger son who goes into politics as the nobility of the eighteenth century went in for gout—it is not from these that we expect enlightened analysis of the political conditions of the time. Certainly we do not receive it.

But it is something in substance more valuable that we receive. These, after all, are the people who ruled England less than a century ago. They are the people whose sober determination and grim contempt for novel doctrine were largely responsible for the overthrow of Napoleon. How did they regard the England which they raised to be the dominant Power of Europe? What were their thoughts about the problems of their time? It is to questions like these that this correspondence permits an answer.

The England of the latter part of the eighteenth century was ruled by a serio-political class intensely interested in itself and supremely unconscious of a possible scepticism as to its fitness for its task. Politics was still an hereditary occupation. Pitt and Fox were both the inheritors of a great name; Burke never entered the inner circle of admitted power. If Canning was the son of an actress the Greek verses of Eton and the epigrams of Oxford were permitted to obscure the stain. The great families were the rulers of England; and the time had not yet come when what one of them called the "damned nonsense" of popular merit was to raise its insolent head. They were the people whose wealth had been cleansed by the pride of forgetful antiquity and who ruled because men could not doubt that government was their natural function. It was as natural for them to think in terms of statecraft as it was for them to stand firm against ideas which might, by distributing their power, undermine it. They paid no heed to novelty for it was not in the decalogue of aristocracy. They did not think of the poor save as they who are always with us and thus find a cheerful oblivion in their eternality. Trade was something in the city—and they were proud of its volume while they regretted acquaintance with its individual participants. Ireland is a place from which to stay away; it has been in insurrection and its misery—was 1798 a prophecy?—is the atonement for its wantonness. The French Revolution is not a principle to discuss, but a spectacle to visit. Napoleon is not the embodiment of an immense idea, but a dangerous adventurer by whose converse one may be thrilled. The continental war is a passionate interlude, rivaled at moments by gay meteors like Roscius the actor. Mr. Fox is a fascinating scoundrel the blandishments of whose doctrine Mr. Pitt may be trusted to withstand; and there is an inner certainty that Mr. Fox is really safe since he derives from one of the right families. The king is still the center of the political stage, and he can be trusted to support Mr. Pitt in these troubled times. It is an England which dances and drinks deep; and the vague murmurings of an awakened democracy it will set to the easy rhythm of Canning's contemptuous jingles. It is an England passionately interested in gossip and scandal. Its politics are a series of intimate personalia. Its principles are the instructive determination to keep order by maintaining possession. It holds by property and the British constitution and damns Tom Paine for his plausible falsities. Pitt and Nelson are its heroes, and Mr. Burke has written its political Bible. Yet withal it is a kindly England, anxious to effect some permanent good, tender in misfortune, cheerful in defeat, silent in victory. What it needs is the contact of men and women whose path truth has not made easy. It needs the sense of novelty. It needs to be shocked out of its belief that the ideas of 1688 were a permanent solution of all social questions. It is time that its religious scepticism—though it is vaguely aware of Wesley—be paralleled by political uncertainty. It needs to discover the moral significance of popular governments. It is too satisfied with life, too content with the meagre ways of custom and precedent. It is too apt to search for public opinion in the House of Commons and too little critical of that chamber's constituency. For it, in fact, the meaning of England is that it should continue a glorious holiday—making society in which other people do the work. In the dirt and sweat of everyday life it has no interest. It is the pleasures and principles of a closed corporation it is alone anxious to promote. It has few searchings of its political heart and its military achievements confirm its self-confidence. Yet, as with Fox, it is capable of a glorious generosity, and, as with Pitt, of a matchless determination. It has an instinctive appreciation of beauty—though it lacks the ability to share its recognition. It lives in a series of moments and asks from life only that it shall be a series of pulsating excitements. Yet it is also an England beneath the surface of whose content may be discerned the vague discomfort of approaching change.

The great history of this time has yet to be written; though a first volume suggests that M. Halévy is destined to give it to us. What it is important to emphasize is the amazing analogy between the England of 1815 and its civilization to-day. It was then assumed, as it is to-day in danger of assuming, that the epoch of warfare is the

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necessary dissolvent of liberalism. Its response to democratic demand was a passionate reactionism. Oppression was its answer to the eager yearning after a richer and fuller life which found vent in the demand for constitutional reform. The result was seventeen sterile and unhappy years. The uneasiness of that time found England on the brink of a continuous precipice. It was the accidental liberalism of Grey and Russell which alone saved the country from serious disaster. That for which the world to-day will anxiously search is the men who are capable of their largeness and clarity of outlook.

H. J. L.

# Military Verse

*A Song of the Guns, by Gilbert Frankau. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 50 cents.*

THE author of the "Song of the Guns," Gilbert Frankau, composed the main plan of the poem during a pause in the battle of Loos, and completed it in the trenches in sight of the devastation of Ypres. We are told that "the last three stanzas were written at midnight in Brigade headquarters with the German shells screaming over into the ruined town."

The arrangement of the voices of the forces of war, in the poem—the Slaves of the Gun, the Gun Teams, the Air Corps, Signals, the Voice of the Guns—recalls strongly of course, probably intentionally, the arrangement of Kipling's Song of the English—the Song of the Dead, the Coast-Wise Lights, the Deep-Sea Cables, the Song of the Songs, the Song of the Cities. The music, not as deep-toned, not as over-toned or harmonic as Kipling's, still resounds with Kipling echoes; and has not a little of the mystic dogmatism of the great singer of the Seven Seas.

Those of us who have ever heard a soldier of our own long war, the great Civil War, describe his days, will have wondered often about many of those aspects of the European war that are here graphically related to us in the Song of the Guns. It is absorbing to hear how the gunners feel in their death-dealing task; how the war looks to the air-corps; to know something of the fortunes of those thousands of horses that have been sent to the war from our middle-western pastures; and to listen to the signals in the trenches. The most overwhelming, the most terrible impression of the poem is its striking tale of the machinal character of war—

"I am only a cog of a gun machine, a link of an endless chain;
And the rounds are drawn, and the rounds are fired, and the empties return again;
Railroads, lorry and limber; battery, column and park;
To the shelf where the set fuse waits the breach, from the quay where the shells embark."

This is the most terrible impression of the "Song of the Guns"; but it is not the most revolting. The most murderous spiritual degradation speaks in the active fighter's pity of the observers—

"Not theirs the wet, glad bayonet, the red and racing hour;
The rush that clears the bombing-post with knife and hand grenade;
Not theirs the zest, when steel to breast, the last survivors cower——"

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The zest of placing a steel at the breast of a cowering survivor; the joy of a dull, triumphing savage, battering out the sacred fire of life;—what victims will you give up to be the prey of that zest and of that hideous joy? None, of course. So long as the Germans sing songs of hate and the Allies like to see lonely survivors cowering under the assault of knives, civilization will feel the existence of something really intolerable to the human spirit in any victory.

War perhaps always arouses the lust to crush life. But most war poetry ignores or romanticizes that impulse. Our own greatest war poetry has been sung for us by a peace-lover in Whitman's Drum Taps and Ashes of Soldiers. There is no breath of the raider's rapture in all its beauty.

"How solemn the thought of my whispering soul to each in the ranks and to you.
I see behind each mask, that wonder a kindred soul;
O the bullet could never kill what you really are, dear friend,
Nor the bayonet stab what you really are!"

None of the poetry of the European war that I have seen has spoken in this spirit—neither war poetry nor peace poetry. Not only Whitman's dignified dirges, but the gravity and modesty of General Grant, the fame of his desire that the southern officers keep their swords—and the ennobling mists of time have veiled for us the brutish love of slaughter that doubtless accompanied our long and wild struggle. It is fortunate that we possess a poem that speaks this debasing attribute as clearly as "The Song of the Guns."

EDITH WYATT.

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# Gift Books All*

IF it is impertinent to recommend books to people, to give first-hand information about them is a friendly undertaking. Publishers' catalogues, like politicians' promises, are always too good to be true; they overwhelm with their assurance of riches. When we read them, we live in a dream world. Geniuses are as abundant as blackberries. Every season becomes another golden age. This high mood can so ill withstand the shock of disillusion from an actual visit to a book-shop that often publishers' catalogues have the reverse of the effect hoped for. We buy nothing, because everything is so good that we cannot bear to make a choice. So in this list of new gift books of the season—this suggestion—this fugitive hint—I make no claim to finality and no pretense of a criterion. I offer a starting-point, a nucleus, around which that most amiable vice of the holiday season of loosened purse-strings, book-buying, may, I hope, be indefinitely extended.

For in spite of the rise of the price of paper and ink, the gift book *par excellence*—the illustrated, decorative volume—is crowding the book-stalls this season. Indirectly, the war has produced many: "Belgium," Raemaeker's

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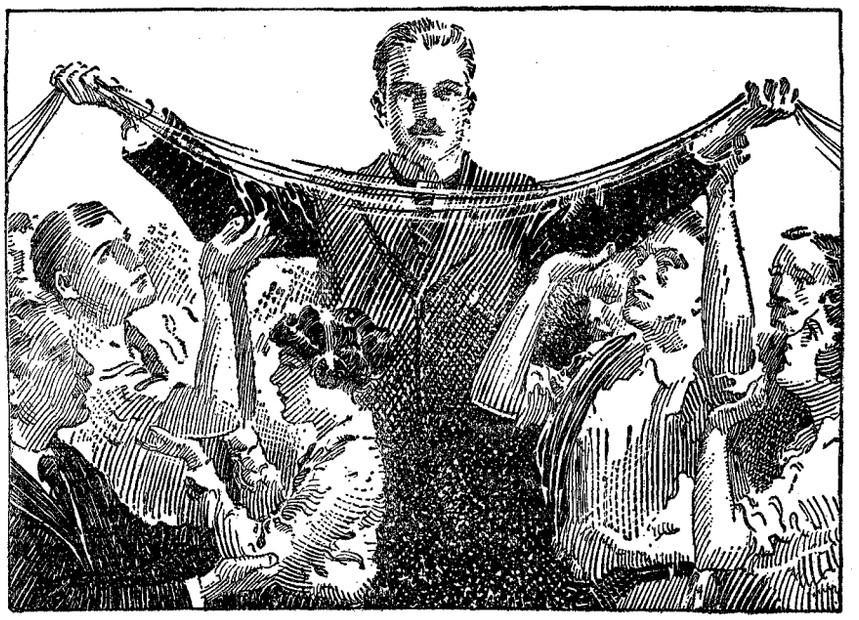

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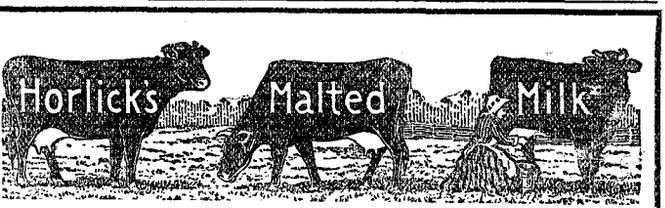


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Cartoons, the "Book of Italy," Edmund Dulac's "Fairy Tales of the Allied Nations." Fairies exist in Germany, although probably no one but Chesterton would admit it to-day, and it seems a pity that along with Turkish and Bulgarian sprites they have to be exiled from Mr. Dulac's volume. But it is still a pretty partnership, this collection of the Fairy Tales of the Allied Nations which the artist has illustrated in his happiest manner, with his soft colors, so unlike the animated vegetable effects of the "pure" color theorists of lamented memory, and with his unusually deft, modulated technique. In buying "Belgium" there is the extraneous pleasure of knowing that you are also contributing to the Belgian Relief Fund, and the chances are that if you spend many minutes looking at drawings which are said to have twice caused the attempted assassination of the artist at the hands of German agents, you will find it difficult to purchase "Belgium" fast enough. I know a pro-German friend, who contemptuously says that Italy is a third-class power conducting a third-class war, to whom I should like to send the "Book of Italy" to let him become again aware that there are other forms of national greatness than the comparative strength of the field artillery. And the "Russian School of Painting"—for the war seems to have made any book about or from Russia or by a Russian half-popular in advance—might cause him to qualify that race-proud epithet of his—"barbarian"—applied so generously to all the peoples east of Warsaw or the Carpathians.

In fact, in spite of all our sophistication, our favorite gift books, if we are to judge by the ever sturdy clash of the color press in the print shops, still continue to be the illustrated volumes. The lacy, valentine affairs, with a thin rivulet of inconsequential text, of even a few seasons ago are fast disappearing. And like the old-fashioned Christmas, the holiday gift book seems to be steadily changing its distinctive character and tone to something, well, less sentimental, let us say. Tennyson's "Maud" sleeps peacefully between the snug, red covers of the dignified Cambridge edition. Expensive editions of the "Christmas Carol" with illustrations "appropriate to the spirit of the day" do not flood the book-stalls. But reprints of old favorites like Mr. Shepparson's gorgeous drawings for the poems of Keats and Mr. Byam Shaw's illustrations of Laurence Hope's "India's Love Lyrics" (now in its second season) or the handsome "Blue Bird" which Dodd, Mead have produced for the holiday trade are eagerly examined by would-be purchasers. For books like these satisfy some deep desire in us to send a gift book which, in a word, *looks* like a gift book. Publishers secretly flatter our perspicacity by solemnly affirming that these gift books aren't gift books at all—books "of permanent value," we are asked to remember. Our real wish, of course, is to send some object, if book it is to be, in itself an aesthetic delight, that is, what we consider an aesthetic delight, for naturally the recipient may differ from us on that point. We may have an eccentric friend to whom we send three or four volumes of a uniform set of Hardy every Christmas. With Heaven's grace and our remembrance continuing, we shall in due course complete the set. Or our undergraduate friend may have pleaded with us, tears in his eyes, to send him volume so-and-so of the Home University Library or the Everyman series. I fancy that most of us yet linger reluctantly near the crowded, colored shelves where we can see such triumphs of book-making and decoration as "Clair de Lune," with its colored text, its music and verse. The wayward fancy for limp-leather


# PONTORMO

Pontormo offers a new field to the biographer. Nothing of moment has been published heretofore in regard to him, with the exception of his "Life" by Vasari, a brilliant essay by Berenson, and a technical study of his drawings by Frederick Mortimer Clapp.

Pontormo was at once a draughtsman, a portraitist and a decorator. As a draughtsman he is ranked after Michelangelo and Leonardo as the greatest which Europe has produced.

As a portraitist, Pontormo is the most modern of the Old Masters. His education was in the Old School, but he absorbed more vitally than his contemporaries the influence of Michelangelo. He was not, however, a mere imitator for, to the bigness of Michelangelo's canon, he succeeded in adding a happy spacing and arrangement to his portraits, so that his sitters seem more than humanly calm and dignified. Furthermore, his inscrutable insight into the depths of his sitter's personality made his portraits the most haunting and appealing of the Renaissance.

As a decorator, he understood more than any Italian of the Renaissance what is essential in mural decoration.

As a man, as well as an artist, Pontormo repays study. Left an orphan early in life, he developed fully all his peculiarities. A singular spirit, lonely, whimsical, poor, proud, laborious, frugal, it is interesting to follow his development as it is outlined in his Diary, which Mr. Clapp has reconstructed and analyzed. The Diary, it may be mentioned, is now published for the first time.

It is extraordinary for a twentieth-century author to have the opportunity and the material to write the first authentic life of an old master; yet it is not an opportunity of which the first comer could avail himself. Mr. Clapp, himself a poet and art critic, has shown himself peculiarly fitted for the work. He has assumed the task with an enthusiasm and devotion which has made no effort seem too great which would contribute to the publication of Pontormo's life in a suitable form.

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Professor Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., has described Mr. Clapp's book as "the most important monograph on painting at once written by an American and published by an American Press."

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## Paul Claudel.

Readers of Mr. Rosenfeld's splendid review of M. Claudel's work, which appeared in the *New Republic* for November 25th, will be glad to know that copies of "The Tidings Brought to Mary," translated by Louise Morgan Sill ($1.50 net), and "The East I Know," translated by Teresa Frances and William Rose Benét ($1.25 net), are on sale at all leading booksellers and at the

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library-table delights defies all the nets of the practical. Robert W. Service's "Rhymes of a Rolling Stone" are probably for sale in many a shop for a few cents. But the new illustrated edition of this season will tempt many a lover of those resounding verses.

Indeed, that happiest compromise of our more considerate nephews, cousins and aunts, who no longer buy mere expensive and elaborate futility and expect us, under the obligation of our affections, to be pleased, is more than ever the new edition. Masefield's "Salt Water Poems and Ballads" has been deftly illustrated by Mr. Pears. There is a handsome new edition of the works of Richard Harding Davis. The "Deep Sea" edition of the works of Joseph Conrad has been increased by five new volumes, making a complete set of his tales. The conviction seems to be growing that the book one wants is the best gift book. Which perhaps explains why we are getting almost as many new editions as new publications.

And also why the special interest books of the holiday period are on the increase. Hobby-lovers are having it quite their own way this Christmas. The range of human interest has a staggering exposition in the book-shops. There are books on "Chinese Pottery and Porcelains," on American blue china, on moose, on "The Game Fishes of the World." Innumerable books on the dance jostle for a place alongside books on "Saints and Their Emblems." John Muir's book, "A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf," claims more attention than just that of the professional walker. Discover your friend's avocation; there is a new book frankly catering to just that idiosyncracy. Usually, it will be an expensive book, although hardly so expensive as Mr. Holsen's book on Chinese pottery, which sells—in two volumes—for $25.00 a set. The implication is clear. Most of the fortunate individuals who nourish a hobby can afford to. A specialist will not consider price.

Whatever the change in the general tone of the holiday gift book, the children are still sedulously blanketed from the bitter wind of a sceptical and unromantic day. Never have they been so pampered. Not so long ago they were tricked and beguiled by fair-sounding adventurous titles, only to have their faith in grown-ups shattered at the discovery of the canker of perfect moral sentiments in the rose of romance or the serpent of school-room lessons in the garden of a specious Jules Verne. That was the product of a hypocritical age, which suffragists constantly refer to as "passing." It was thought indecent not to wrap up a complete lesson in every literary package for the young. We are more honest with the children to-day. Serried ranks of genuine adventure stories, "the real thing," crowd the book-shop basements. Volumes are entitled for just what they are, and no little boy or little girl is deceived. Even that period of imaginative splendor between the nursery and the first self-conscious visit to the public school is understood.

The children usually get the books they want. If our friends are as lucky as they, we have sent them "gift" books indeed. H. S.

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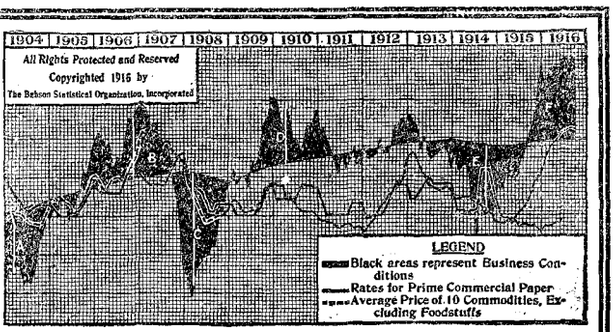
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